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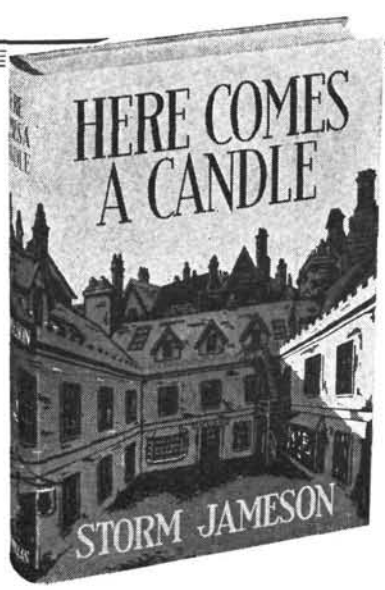

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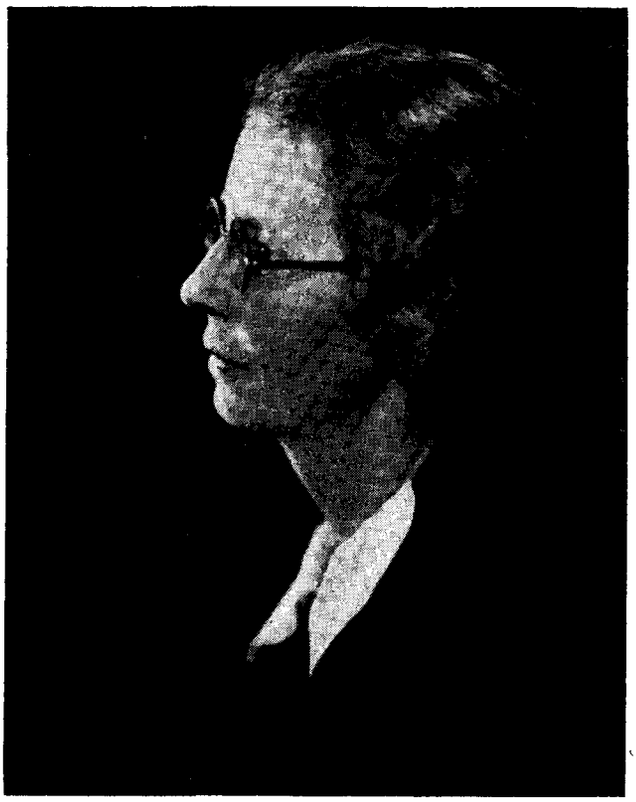
Is the British Novel Dead?

BY PHYLLIS BENTLEY



Elliott & Fry

Phyllis Bentley

IN a recent article in this journal Mr. John Strachey spoke of the "general decay of English imaginative letters," and contended that the excellence of the contemporary English detective novel merely served to emphasize the "extent and devastating character" of this decay. That statement seems to me almost ludicrous in its inaccuracy, and I propose to combat it by citing here a few of the "rising" young novelists of the actual present moment. I am not going to speak of the fiction of Strong, Bates (H. E. and R.), Gerhardi, Linklater, Brophy, Aldington, Graves, Rose Macaulay, Storm Jameson, Winifred Holtby, and other writers whose reputation is already safely established, though I should find it easy enough to defeat Mr. Strachey if I brought up such a battery; I am not going to discuss the great pioneer work of Virginia Woolf and Aldous Huxley; I shall cite just ten of the many young writers who within the last few years alone have entered literature and made new contributions to fiction, with the idea of showing that English fiction is by no means decayed, but on the contrary robustly alive and kicking.

First let me postulate that "British" fiction—a description never used in Great Britain, where we speak of English and American fiction respectively; but I recognize the ambiguity this mode owes to our common tongue—British fiction, then, has certain essential differences from American fiction, and will I think always retain those differences, for they arise out of a difference in our national life. It is a fundamental difference, for it springs from a difference in the physical geography of our respective countries, the difference in climate and size. The tempo of English life, lived in our foggy and nook-shotten isle, is very much slower than the tempo of American life, lived in this sparkling electric air. Again, the surface range of American life is infinitely greater than English life; the enterprising young American has some three million square miles of his own nation at his disposal, and consequently can roam restlessly from city to city, job to job, experience to experience; in England there simply is not room for such agreeable cavortings, the Englishman has either to go to the colonies or stay at home. Consequently, English life tends to be intensive and single where American life tends to be extensive and multiple; and the English novel tends to present a few incidents deeply where the American novel tends to present life through a shrewd observation of many events. Again, the average American is far more articulate than the average Englishman—I see I have slipped out of "British" again; I'm afraid I cannot break myself of the other habit. I have no data on which to institute a comparison of the size of the respective vocabularies of American and Englishman, but a considerable observation has taught me that the American uses his vocabulary more frequently than the Englishman; he uses more words more often—the Englishman expresses much, or means to express much, by the mere tone of the voice, in his fewer words.

I apologize for restating what are probably commonplaces to *Saturday Review* readers, but I feel I must indicate why, in my view, the quick-firing, wise-cracking, wide-ranging American novel never can and never will spring from English soil; because I wish further to make it clear that the absence of these quick-firing, wise-cracking, wide-ranging novels in England is not in the least an indication of decay, of lack of vitality in the English novel. A literature must not falsify its material; it must remain true to the national life in manner no less than matter, if it is to hope to share the national genius. Accordingly the strength of the native English novel still lies in its depth and intensity, its close-knit texture, while the strength of the American novel lies in qualities almost precisely the reverse.

The work of the most distinguished writer on my list must be viewed in this light. Miss Elizabeth Bowen's short stories and novels are, speaking superficially, limited in range; they deal with persons belonging chiefly to one class, the upper middle-class intelligentsia, and not by any means with even all the activities of these persons, for they are invariably shown in their private capacities. Her novels have not, that is to say, any obvious political, industrial, historical, or economic implications. But as regards human emotion they are both deep and wide; there is a poignancy, an intensity in Miss Bowen's presentation of experience which I believe we rightly rank very high; the texture of her fiction is not merely closely, but subtly, woven. Her latest novel, "The Death of the Heart," has a subject which, if timidly or conventionally treated, might well give us a pretty little story of the feeblest and most sentimental kind, for it concerns the spoiling of a young girl's first love affair by the sister-in-law in

Next Week

A PECULIAR TREASURE
By EDNA FERBER
Reviewed by Margaret Culkin Banning

INSIDE GERMANY
By ALBERT GRZESINSKI
Reviewed by Henry C. Wolfe

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E. C. Large "is developing the line opened by Aldous Huxley, and putting science into fiction" . . .

whose house she is making a temporary, reluctant stay. But this novel is in fact an intensive piece of high tragedy. "The highest tragedy," Thomas Hardy has observed, "is that of the worthy encompassed by the inevitable. . . ." Here the young heroine, a girl in her teens, is supremely "worthy"; she is innocence and truth and love itself, she symbolizes all that is good and beautiful in life. She loves—a worthless sophisticate who is already deep in an intrigue with the wife of her brother; this older, more experienced woman, who should have cherished the young life in her care, basely betrays her trust by the small mean act of reading the child's diary. As we read, we feel that profound and universal tragedy, the world's slow, snickering betrayal of all that is good and fair.

And where, by the way, is the true American tragedy? In the American literature I find admirable comedy, romance, chronicle, satire, but as yet no real tragedy in the Sophoclean and Hardyan sense of the word. Dreiser's "An American Tragedy" is an excellent social study, but not a tragedy—the poor, weak hero never reaches tragic heights. Dos Passos's Charlie has a pitiable but not, I think, a tragic fall, for, again, he does not fall far enough; he was never "worthy." Perhaps tragedy does not yet flourish on the soil of this vast country, with its almost limitless possibilities, because as yet no doom is inevitable here? I do not know; I leave the (very interesting) question to those with a greater knowledge of American life and literature than I can claim.

The writer of greatest magnanimity, in the Latin sense of that word, to appear recently in English fiction is Mr. R. C. Hutchinson, whose latest work, "Testament," is undoubtedly the outstanding English novel of 1938. This novel, with Mr. Hutchinson's earlier work, has been widely read in the United States, so I need say little of it here, except that it has both external range and emotional intensity. Its pictures of Russians in war and revolution are superb; sombre, lurid, and pulsating, quite in the Dostoievsky style. You will observe that I say pictures of Russians, not of Russia; a picture of Russia does indeed emerge, but only through the mentalities of the characters. The final "testament" of the hero, who has held unswervingly to the cause of liberty and humanity throughout, and has accordingly suffered at the hands of each political party in turn, is truly memorable, and also completely topical. Altogether, "Testament" is a novel in the grand style, and we may look with the utmost hopefulness to Mr. Hutchinson's future work.

The difference between the tempo of American and English life, reflected in their respective literatures, is again neatly illustrated by the work of another young English writer whose work has quality, Mr. Graham Greene. Mr. Greene began his fiction with a multiplicity novel of a familiar type, "Stamboul Train," which yet stood out from the ruck of such novels by the intensity of its characterization. His two later novels, "A Gun for Sale" and "Brighton Rock," belong to the category of gangster fiction. In the first, a man of the underworld is hired to commit a political murder, commits it, and flees from the pursuing law; while thus "on the run," he is saved from justice by a girl, who attaches herself to him but finally betrays him. How often do we not see this story, swift, quick-firing, full of men with bulging hip-pockets, on a Hollywood film! But in "A Gun for Sale" no machine guns rattle, no G-men step in; the theme of the novel is not whether the murderer will escape or not, it is the moral problem of the girl's attitude to him. Can he trust her? He feels he can, and safely does so, but presently makes a further revelation of his character. Will that shock her into the betrayal for which the reader longs? It is a psychological, not a physical, problem.

"Brighton Rock" deals similarly with the gangster underworld. A gang, operating in that gaudy seaside resort of Brighton, revenges the murder of their leader by frightening a petty journalist to death. By chance two women can break the alibi carefully established for the gang by their new leader, a pathological lad still in his teens. The younger woman loves the boy; he exploits this affection, which he loathes, by marrying her to keep her out of the witness-box. As in the previous novel, the theme of "Brighton Rock" is not the safety of the main character, but the psychological problem of his reactions to his situation. Mr. Greene seems able to investigate these sinister psychologies without sentimentalizing them; his prose has tension, but is never overwritten.

A younger writer on whom I am keeping a hopeful and expectant eye is Mr. E. C. Large, who is developing the line opened by Aldous Huxley, and putting science into fiction. His novel "Sugar from the Air" was just what a young man's first novel should be; that is to say, it attacked existing abuses in a rollicking satire which was never bitter but always penetrating. The story of the young scientist's search for a method of extracting sugar from the air, his attempts to market it, his clash with big business, and his ultimate ejection from all participation in his own process, is full of authentic detail both scientific and commercial, and highly entertaining as well. His second novel is less successful—but then most second novels are less successful than their predecessors, for in the second novel the writer has to become a novelist, find a method, construct, invent, create, instead of just writing blithely as the fancy, or more often the memory, took him in his first work. It is the third novel, when the novelist should have have found his feet and learned his craft, to which the critic directs an anxious eye. Mr. Large's second novel is really two novels, each of which could have been better if written separately. One of the novels is about a young novelist who is writing a novel; his struggles to write, his difficulties with money, his wife, and the outside world, the novel's ultimate acceptance by a book club, and the lionizing of the author, form the framework to the novel he is writing, extracts from which are given at considerable length. This inner novel, an entertaining satire on the exploitation of a drug, something like the Soma drug in Huxley's "Brave New World," which gives its takers not only sleep but highly agreeable dreams, is sufficiently vivacious,

(*Continued on page* **14**)

Oxford Studio

Gwyn Jones: "a sombre but powerful talent which has recently made some mark" . . .

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Looking at Trouble

DAYS OF OUR YEARS. By Pierre van Paassen. New York: Hillman-Curl. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by EUGENE LYONS

THIS book by the former roving correspondent of the New York *World* will be thoughtlessly tagged as another autobiography of another newspaper man. That tag, however, will cover only a small portion of the book's area and will not even suggest its significance. While there is newspapering galore in its 500 crowded pages, and adventure and crucial world events in close-up, the volume adds up to the history of a robust human spirit. Exposed to the life of our epoch at its most brutal depths—international and internal wars, sadistic dictatorships, squalid and exploited colonies in Asia and Africa—that spirit lost none of its native vitality.

A record of intense action and uncompromising thought, "Days of Our Years" never descends to the merely smart or merely shocking. It is pervaded by compassion and a certain moral cleanliness that take it out of the run of newspaper men's memoirs. Two things, above all, set it off from the more typical now-it-can-be-told reporter's book. First and most obvious, its superb writing—only Vincent Sheean's prose, among books in this category, approaches van Paassen's. Second and more important, a quality which I can only describe as spirituality. In the larger sense of the word, the author is religious. He is aware of the actual or potential dignity of life, its flashes of beauty—an awareness that shines through even the most sordid and disheartening events described in these pages.

Lest this frighten off anyone contemptuous or scared of the deeper implications of mortal existence, I hasten to add that as sheer narrative "Days of Our Years" will hold even the most frost-bitten pessimists. Mr. van Paassen fought in the World War and covered every major blood-letting of the next two decades, including those in Ethiopia, Spain, and Palestine. Enjoying the blessed advantages of an unrestricted roving assignment, so envied by correspondents tied to specific posts, he was able to witness nearly all the dramatic events of these our years; to interview nearly every statesman, warrior, and maniacal messiah worth interviewing. Of all these matters, and many besides, he writes vividly and with an intelligence that lights up obscure corners.

Born and raised in the rigorous Calvinism of a small Dutch town, but brushed even then by the wings of liberalism, the author ripened into a skeptical—but not cynical—modernist. His liberalism is not narrow and partisan. From Holland he moved, with his family, to Canada, where he prepared for the ministry and actually attained the status of assistant pastor—among the Hernhutters and Dukhobors of Alberta, of all places. Then the war and its aftermath diverted him, almost by accident, into American journalism.

Evidently he was not too happy under the restrictions of routine American reporting, despite his wider latitude. "When I could not cry out in print against the events I saw, my blood boiled, and sometimes I would pitch in physically . . . . I always forgot that my role was confined to that of a neutral observer of trouble." Ultimately he got himself expelled or barred from practically every country in Europe—including the France that he loved deeply, until the advent of Léon Blum made him more acceptable.

Dozens of amazing tales stud the record, some of them purely personal, others intimately related to world affairs. His dramatic reconstruction of the legend (which he wishes were true but cannot confirm) that Pope Benedict XV appeared in the Champagne trenches and walked into no man's land pleading for peace. His account of the true facts of the siege of Alcázar. His extraordinary interview with Marshal Luyatey, wherein the colonial militarist blamed Pontius Pilate for not having disposed of that rabble-rouser Jesus Christ more expeditiously. His experience with a *Poltergeist*, or ghost or emanation, that haunted his own home outside Paris. I could fill pages merely listing the exciting episodes of Mr. van Paassen's career.

The author's interest and, in the end, passionate personal involvement in the fate of the Jewish race is among the most unusual stories in recent autobiography. The orthodox Calvinists among whom he spent his youth lived by the Old Testament and felt themselves, in a sense, the heritors of Israel. Again and again in his journalistic career he came up against the tragedy, and the sublimity, of the Jew in his modern ordeal of persecution. When his assignments finally took him to Palestine and the Near East, his growing preoccupation with the problem came to a focus. "If Palestine is the Jews' national home, it is my spiritual home," he writes, and readers, having followed the evolution of the author's mind, will not doubt the statement. In the last few years, the reviewer understands, Mr. van Paassen has devoted much time to the Zionist cause. His estimate of the Palestine situation today is significantly close to that offered by William B. Ziff recently in "The Rape of Palestine."

No review can do this rich, well-written book full justice. I recommend it highly.

Eugene Lyons, author of "Assignment in Utopia," has recently become editor of The American Mercury.

Matthew Arnold

Arnold's Influence

MATTHEW ARNOLD. By Lionel Trilling. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1939. $3.50.

Reviewed by JAMES ORRICK

"ARNOLD was the most influential critic of his age; the estimate must be as unequivocal as this," writes Mr. Trilling. The fact that his influence on the present age is not greater proceeds largely from the over-emphasis placed on certain aspects of his doctrine (the word comes naturally in connection with him) in academic circles. Mr. Trilling speaks of the "frank and simple dualism which made Arnold in part congenial to the Humanism of Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More." What he elsewhere calls "Arnold's subtle critical dialectic" has provided a refuge for the type of mind which wishes to make the best of two worlds. On the other hand, Arnold is easy game for the clever writers (some of them actually Victorian themselves) who specialize in the entertaining exposure of Victorian inconsistency.

In a really notable book designed "to show the thought of Matthew Arnold in its complex unity and to relate it to the historical and intellectual events of his time," Mr. Trilling takes Matthew Arnold seriously without being pious about him. The importance of the book is that it is a comprehensive study of the whole man. For Matthew Arnold was not primarily a literary critic; the clue to his enigma is that he was really a social critic.

"The secretary of old Lord Lansdowne, the Liberal peer, was a singularly handsome young man whose manners were Olympian and whose waistcoats were remarkable. He was most ironic; his very serious university friends were often annoyed with him because he laughed too much." The prevailing sadness of his first volume of verse seemed to his friends an astonishing contradiction; but it was the first step in the unfolding of the true Matthew Arnold.

In a remarkable and absorbing chapter,

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Mr. Trilling shows how much of the true Matthew Arnold was the product of Dr. Thomas Arnold, certainly one of the most interesting men of the Age of Reform which was England's answer to the challenge of the French Revolution. "England," writes Mr. Trilling, "reacting from the religious indifference of the 18th century and from the French Revolution, went into black broadcloth and Rugby cut the new fabric. Young Matthew Arnold's physical and spiritual waistcoats were a salutary protest against the prevailing wear." Matthew Arnold remarks somewhere that we enter into our maturity "shorn of many beams." Shorn of his waistcoats, he is revealed as the son of his father, as a social reformer. At the core of Dr. Arnold's thought, Mr. Trilling finds the assertion

> that there is nothing essentially antagonistic between democracy and the State, that, indeed, each demands the other for completeness, that democracy does not imply laissez-faire, that organization does not imply repression. In this synthesis of the two dominant and seemingly opposed tendencies of his time and ours lies Thomas Arnold's political achievement. Matthew Arnold's, more complex, is not basically different.

Mr. Trilling does not oversimplify, however. With learning, penetration, and common sense he analyzes Arnold's career from lyric poetry, through literary and political criticism, to the religious writings which his contemporaries found so baffling. He does not perhaps make quite enough of the poetry for its own sake, but that is subsidiary to his main purpose. At every step Mr. Trilling not only unfolds the sources, the provocation, and the contemporary reaction, but almost casually weaves in so many citations from writers and thinkers of the present day that he hardly needs to point out the enduring significance of Arnold's criticism. This is a book for all who are seriously interested in how the twentieth century grew out of the nineteenth. It is certainly the best book which has been written about Matthew Arnold for a long time.

James Orrick is the author of a study of Arnold and Goethe.

Fair State

THE LONG LANE. By Phil Stong. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

IN his new novel, apparently somewhat autobiographical, Phil Stong carries on his revolt from the Revolt-from-the-Village movement in American literature. Long before Lewis, Anderson, and Masters (and Mencken in his best Free State Billingsgate) set out to blacken the character of the Mid-West village, Hamlin Garland had painted a thoroughly grim picture of the Middle Border. Garland spent his youth in Iowa, but one can hardly imagine gift editions of his autobiographical works with illustrations by Grant Wood. His Iowa is not Phil Stong's.

"The Long Lane" is a pleasant addition to Stong's Iowana begun so auspiciously seven years ago with "State Fair." The new novel has the same endearing and sound virtues which in "State Fair" won Stong immediately a discriminating and hopeful audience: a racy, swinging style, a gusto that does not weary, a gorgeous sense of the comic, a group of interesting characters (unlike Lewis, he rigorously excludes dullards from his pages), and a three-dimensional setting not a local color back-drop—as authentic in detail as a drawing by Doris Lee, inseverable from the warp and woof of the story.

The new novel possesses also one defect of its predecessors: although the characters are interesting, their behavior is not always credible. Ken Brubaker, the young protagonist, is torn by a very real double allegiance—devotion to his farm and to his father, who flees to the city. The adolescent boy has an earthy love of life and a sensitiveness like the young Eugene Gant, but both in thought and speech he is unconvincingly sophisticated. His father is a somewhat stodgy county official until domestic calamity transforms him swiftly into a successful big business man. Ken's Dresden-china mother, in high heels, "turning out" all the upstairs rooms in one half day of fall house-cleaning, is equally incredible.

The first half of the book is almost continuously delightful, and although the plot is hackneyed—a misunderstood wife falls in love with her husband's handsome, breezy young brother—Stong makes the climax exciting and fresh. Later, when the deserted husband and son are in Des Moines, the interest lags; the contempt Stong feels for the clamor and dullness of the city seems to subdue the vigor of these pages. The "emancipated" reader may find the too, too happy ending a bit cloying, but he will relish the general unmorality of the novel, for, defying all saws of poetic justice, the characters eat their cake and have it, too.

"The Long Lane" belongs to the popular nostalgic literature of the late 1930s. In novels, plays, and autobiographies writers, like the Billionaire in Kaiser's "The Coral," seek a grip on an unplagued and stable past to steady them in these fretful days. In "Who's Who," Stong names as his address, Washington, Connecticut, but adds, "Home, Keosaqua, Iowa."

"Phil Stong carries on his revolt from the Revolt-from-the-Village movement" . . . (From the jacket of "The Long Lane")

Case History

DANGER SIGNAL. By Phyllis Bottome. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by KATHARINE SIMONDS

MISS BOTTOME has returned in her new novel to the background and approach of "Private Worlds." She is concerned once more with the psychological crises which suddenly make otherwise normal people become irrational and dangerous. Hilda, a more than usually attractive and intelligent London typist, reaches such a stage of desperate anger against her former lover, Ronnie, that she resolves to kill him. She is prevented by a woman psychologist, who, encountering her by chance, discovers her intention and disarms her psychologically.

In the earlier novel, Miss Bottome created a large group of sympathetic and interesting characters in whose lives the reader enjoyed participating. In this shorter and far thinner book, she has mostly dramatized, in her incomparably clear and careful way, a case history of a not very impressive subject. Hilda herself is neither individual nor touching enough to seem important; and Ronnie's devastating charm never enthralls the reader as it did all the other characters. Dr. Silla, the Czech psychologist, does indeed capture the stage, being both sympathetic and surprising; while Aunt Edith, whose mind is open in theory and shut in practice, and whose solution for every crisis is conversation, is excellent.

For the rest, however, "Danger Signal" is unsatisfying. The characters and situations are seldom banal, but in her enthusiasm for the effect of ideas upon people, the author often oversimplifies the people.

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Wilson's Year of Crisis

WOODROW WILSON: LIFE AND LETTERS. Vol. VII: War Leader. April 6, 1917—Feb. 28, 1918. By Ray Stannard Baker. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1939. $5.

Reviewed by RAYMOND J. SONTAG

WITH this volume Mr. Baker begins a courageous and laudable experiment. Abandoning all topical arrangement and all interpretation, he sets down, day by day, what Woodrow Wilson said, wrote, and did, and what others said, wrote, and did to the President. Domestic and international events which obviously affected Mr. Wilson's fortunes or actions are briefly noted. Cross references enable the reader to keep clear the evolution of problems, and an unusually full index makes topical analysis possible. The whole volume is as impersonal in composition as the chief usher's diary of appointments, upon which, indeed, Mr. Baker has drawn heavily. Unless the appetite of our generation has been hopelessly corrupted by biographers who serve their evidence to the reader not only premasticated, but predigested, this opportunity to form a relatively independent judgment on Wilson's war record should be welcomed.

Of course, the qualifying word, *relatively* independent, should be emphasized. Out of a mass of evidence, Mr. Baker has chosen those fragments which he thinks of importance. We cannot pass final judgment on his selection until the Wilson papers are made available to qualified students. To a vastly greater extent than in the earlier volumes, however, the reader is left to his own resources. It will be interesting to observe how many are willing to expend the effort needed to assemble a finished portrait from the fragments scattered through these pages.

To bring this cold chronological record to life, the reader must live through the war days, and live through them as Woodrow Wilson. He must picture himself in Washington almost uninterruptedly, including the summer, and without benefit of air-conditioning. The days begin easily, usually a round of golf, followed by a few hours in his study. Then come the afternoon appointments, on August 16, for instance:

> Oliver P. Newman, commissioner of the District of Columbia; Representative Anthony of Kansas; Senator Fletcher of Florida and Representative Small of North Carolina; Senator King of Utah; Franklin D. Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy; Secretary Daniels, Admirals Benson and Mayo and Captain Jackson; Judge Robert S. Lovett, within a few days appointed a member of the War Industries Board to superintend the priority of shipments; Attorney General Gregory.

Before and between appointments there are letters to write, some of lasting importance: to Secretary Baker, on price-fixing; to Herbert Hoover on control of wheat and rye; to Theodore Wright explaining that "I dare not intervene by way of special exemptions in the matter of the army draft"; to Colonel House, outlining a reply to the Pope's plea for peace: "I am rushing this through my type-writer (and through my mind, too, for that matter), on a desperately busy day, and may not have expressed my conclusions happily, but I am in no uncertainty as to their substance."

Then, relaxation. If there are evening appointments, the President takes a drive

Harris & Ewing

Woodrow Wilson in 1918

in the late afternoon with Mrs. Wilson; then dinner, at which the desire of guests to talk business must be rigidly suppressed. If the evening is free, he works in the study until dinner, and goes to Keith's afterwards.

So it went. Golf to refresh the body; a drive or the theater to refresh the spirit. For the rest, people to be seen, reports to be read, letters to be written. People who beg, people with panaceas, people who bully, all demand decisions, decisions on little details—why do you insist on ending sentences with prepositions?—decisions involving the comfort and security of the American nation and other nations. The members of the shipping board fight like cats in a bag: they must be dumped overboard and a new start made. Mr. Hoover and Mr. McAdoo snarl at each other: they are indispensable and must be made to work together. Restrictions on the freedom of the press cause endless headaches: just where should the line be drawn? Gutzon Borglum pounds at supposed inefficiency in the production of aircraft; and in 1917 a President who is exceptionally well informed on questions of personnel can write to his secretary: "take this letter yourself to whoever is the head of the aircraft production management and find out just how much is in it." Advisers must be—and were—given full responsibility, but they must not be allowed to forget that ultimate control over policy rested with the President: "I hope, my dear Mac, that hereafter you will let me see these messages before they are sent and not after, because they touch matters of vital policy upon which it is imperative that I should retain control."

Time for large questions of policy must somehow be found in the rush of detail. Railroads, food, shipping, the rights of neutrals, the conduct and the purpose of the war itself, upon all a clear line of action must be established and never abandoned. Mark all the passages relating, for instance, to war aims and coöperation with the Allies in this volume; then read them consecutively. A remarkably consistent course becomes obvious. The rule was, military and financial coöperation to the limit, but absolutely no merging of political activity. The United States was an "associated" power, not one of the Allies. This strategy was dictated by a steady recognition that the Allies were fighting for objectives which the President intended to oppose when the fighting ceased. These policies were embodied in the secret treaties which Balfour had, with certain exceptions, sent to Wilson (pp. 74, 75). To preserve freedom of action for the United States at the peace conference the President vigilantly resisted all efforts to establish community of political action. "When the war is over," he told Colonel House, "we can force them to our way of thinking, because by that time they will, among other things, be financially in our hands; but we cannot force them now" (p. 180). Therefore, he ignored the secret treaties, and revealed his own war aims only gradually. On one question of policy after another, it is possible to see a clear line from which Wilson never deviated.

Some years ago, Lord Cecil of Chelwood commented on the way in which continued responsibility destroyed a statesman's faculty of decision. "That seems to be one of the faculties that wear out soonest. To decide makes a considerable strain on the nervous force and the strain increases with apprehended unpopularity of the decision. Then ensues a search for some means to avoid effort. Postponement in its various forms is welcomed." Most of us, living over the first months of war through these pages, will marvel to discover how little of this characteristic vice of statesmen was to be found in Woodrow Wilson after many years of executive responsibility. "Take the whip hand," he admonished House; at the end of February, 1918, the President still had the whip hand.

Raymond J. Sontag, professor of history at Princeton, is the author of "Germany and England: Background of Conflict."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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Writ in Sound

ALTHOUGH the Talking Book for the blind has existed barely six years as an accomplished fact, it had its genesis in the last century. It dates in reality from the day, in a New Jersey laboratory, when Thomas A. Edison's experimental wax cylinder gave forth its initial squeaks and squawks. Even at that date Edison foresaw the Talking Book.

It is difficult to understand why it took so long for Edison's invention to reach the blind as he foresaw. But this delay almost exactly parallels the history of finger-reading for the sightless. It is, after all, the blind who know best what the blind need. It was the Frenchman, Louis Braille, himself without sight, who invented the system of raised dots which bears his name. It was again a blind man, Robert B. Irwin, Executive Director of the American Foundation for the Blind, who proved a pathfinder in the new medium—that of sound. He, through the national organization which he directs, had developed braille printing in this country to a point where he had made the books for finger-reading both less cumbersome and less costly by half. But he felt sure that thousands in this country's blind population of 130,000 could never master braille. The American Foundation's investigations proved his surmise correct. They showed that only twenty-five per cent of the country's blind from coast to coast were reading braille with any degree of proficiency or pleasure.

He interested a philanthropic New Yorker who had long shown an interest in the blind, and she consented to underwrite a substantial part of the sums needed for experimentation. He interested the Carnegie Corporation with the same success and began two years of research. As a result, the engineers employed devised a long-playing disc, substantially lighter in weight and more durable than the commercial phonographic record. They devised a reading machine equipped with speed and tone regulators which the blind could easily manipulate, and on June 29, 1932, *The New York Times* announced the birth of the Talking Book.

As blind readers know it today, it consists of a portfolio of discs on which trained readers from the stage and radio have recorded much of all that is rewarding in classic and contemporary literature. The blind users know also the reading machine as something that resembles a portable phonograph, specially fashioned and simplified and easy to work and control by touch.

Although each side of these twelve-inch records plays for fifteen or sixteen minutes, it takes from fifteen to eighteen records to record an average size book. This means that it has a reading time of approximately nine hours. When one gets away from the average length book, however, one encounters figures like these: Charlotte Brontë's "Jane Eyre" runs to thirty-four double-sided discs and is the longest novel yet recorded by the American Foundation for the Blind. The longest book on the discs happens to be the New Testament, which takes forty records. Other books in the higher brackets include Thackeray's "Henry Esmond," thirty-two records; Paul Leicester Ford's "Janice Meredith," thirty-one; Wilkie Collins's "The Woman in White" and "The Moonstone," each requiring twenty-six discs.

Naturally, experimentation did not stop with the first successful volume. The chance lay ahead to make full use of this new literary medium to develop the full range of the Talking Book as a volume writ in sound. Mr. Irwin, whose interest increased with each new development, felt that blind readers might gain something of the author's personality and his meaning if they heard the author's actual voice. He persuaded several authors to read the opening "page" or two of their books on the Talking Book disc. John H. Finley and Congressman Kent E. Keller, for instance, did not stop when they had completed a single "page" or side, but read right through "A Pilgrim in Palestine," and "Prosperity through Employment," respectively, without relinquishing the task to a professional reader. In most cases, however, in which authors' voices are used, the bulk of the work is taken by a trained voice. Those whose voices initiate their volumes for the blind include Alexander Woollcott, Stephen Vincent Benét, Dr. Raymond L. Ditmars, William Beebe, and Eleanor Roosevelt.

The next logical step lay in introducing incidental music and sound effects. The recording of Dickens's "A Christmas Carol" offered an initial opportunity, and the strains of "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," introduced to the blind that well-loved book. In recording Stephen Vincent Benét's poem, "John Brown's Body," the Foundation went a step further and used a number of voices to interpret various sections of the book and incidental music of the Civil War Period, as well as martial sounds that enhanced the book's atmosphere. By that time it had, of course, recorded many of Shakespeare's plays as regular Talking Books. That is, a single reader embarked on each scene and act, reading the characters, locales, and stage directions as they appeared in the text. These plays, read by a single reader, proved so popular with the blind that the Foundation, with the encouragement of Mr. M. A. Roberts, of the Library of Congress, decided to take the next logical step and produce the plays in full, with complete casts of Broadway players, with all necessary sound effects and period music. Some of the plays acted in this way for the blind are Aeschylus's "Agamemnon," A. A. Milne's "Mr. Pim Passes By," Sophocles's "Oedipus, King of Thebes," George Bernard Shaw's "The Devil's Disciple," Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and Eugene O'Neill's "Anna Christie." From all of which it will appear that the list of Talking Book titles from which blind readers may now choose, is a thoroughly comprehensive one. It ranges, in fact, from the Psalms of David to the stories of P. G. Wodehouse. It takes in its compass the standard books of fiction, of poetry, of biography, works on history, books of travel, and the fairy tales of science as told by Sir James Jeans, William Beebe, John Burroughs, and Robert A. Millikan.

Today most of the titles turned out in sound are selected by the Library of Congress. The American Foundation for the Blind has equipped a studio and trained a personnel which records the Talking Books without profit for the Library of Congress in order to make the appropriation for Talking Book records produce as many titles as possible. These are placed in the twenty-seven regional public libraries across the country which operate departments for the blind. The Talking Books travel from library to reader and back in stout cartons, postage free.

Most publishers have shown a heartening willingness to coöperate with the Talking Book in giving permission either free or at a nominal charge for the recording of works to which they hold the copyright. Actually, both the Foundation and the Library of Congress strictly adhere to the policy stamped on each record: "Recorded solely for the use of the blind."

Up to the present the American Foundation for the Blind has turned out 229 complete Talking Book volumes, and 2879 double-sided discs. Many of these records are short stories, poems, or essays—complete units in their own right.

The present writer, a Talking Book reader of two years' standing, is confident that the appreciation he feels for these volumes writ in sound is echoed by the constantly growing number of sightless readers across the country to whom science has opened up new intellectual worlds of profit and pleasure.

F. Fraser Bond.

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Letters to the Editor: *"A Connecticut Yankee" and "The Sword in the Stone"*

Mark Twain and the Middle Ages

SIR:—*How* can Basil Davenport say of Mark Twain in his review of "The Sword in the Stone," that he was "a man who hated the Middle Ages, knowing nothing whatever about them"?

The man who wrote "Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc" knew a great deal about the Middle Ages, the period, incidentally, in which the Maid lived, not King Arthur. The Middle Ages began after Arthur—about the sixth century.

Twain may not have known how a boar-hunt was conducted, but he knew something that goes deeper—the spirit of man, the intolerance that characterized the Dark Ages, which we are probably approaching again.

I don't quarrel with Mr. Davenport's liking Mr. White's book. I've read it, and was thoroughly bored, though "The Wind in the Willows" and similar British classics to which other reviewers have compared Mr. White's book are favorites of mine. I might add the Middle Ages are my favorite years of history, and I have read widely of them.

I also think that with a few deletions the book would have made a good juvenile, and in the course of my years in the publishing field I have had considerable to do with juvenile books.

I object to Mr. Davenport's sweeping condemnation of an author who will undoubtedly outlive Mr. White. I suggest he run through "Joan of Arc" again.

MURIEL FULLER.

New York City.

Mr. Davenport Replies

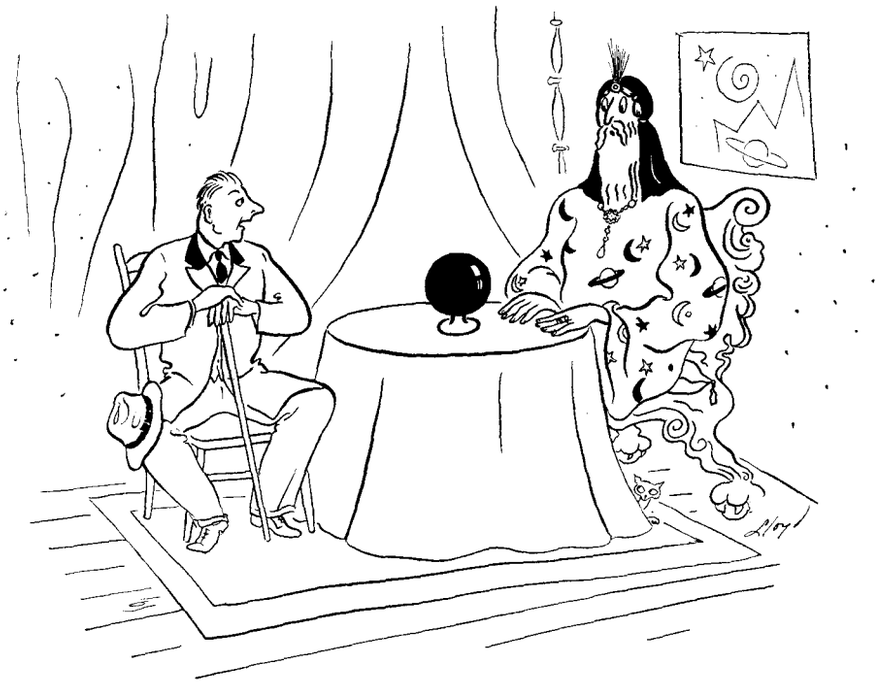
SIR:—It is evident that between Miss Fuller and me there is one of those fundamental divergencies of taste which it is no use trying to bridge. My feeling about the medievalism displayed in the "Personal Recollections of Joan of Arc" was perfectly expressed by Mark Twain's close friend William Dean Howells, in the course of an otherwise laudatory review. Howells said: "My suffering begins when he does the supposedly medieval thing. Then I suspect that his armor is of tin, that the castles and rocks are pasteboard, that the mob of citizens and soldiers who fill the air with the clash of their two-up-and-two-down combats and the well-known muffled roar of their voices, have been hired in at so much a night, and that Joan herself is sometimes in an awful temper behind the scenes." I gather that Miss Fuller would not agree with this, and I cannot hope to persuade her to do so.

I can, however, try to explain what I meant in saying, with what was intended for hyperbole, that Twain knew nothing whatever about the Middle Ages. I did not mean, of course, that he was ignorant of universally known facts, as that Arthur was supposed to have lived in the sixth century, but in fiction is generally regarded as belonging to the time of Sir Thomas Malory (judging from the armor, Twain appears to have vaguely visualized him as a century or more later than that). I meant, first, that Twain was ignorant of all the everyday, unsensational details of living without which history lacks perspective; and second, he was ignorant of the specifically medieval spirit, which stamps everything produced in that era. It is no answer to this to say that he knew the spirit of man, as shown in intolerance, since, as Miss Fuller remarks, we have intolerance with us today; it existed in the ancient world and the world of the Renaissance, as well as the medieval and modern worlds; to say that Twain knew the intolerance of the human spirit is simply to say that he knew one of the obvious attributes of humanity in the mass, not that he knew the Middle Ages.

It is obvious in all Mark Twain's work that he was lacking in the historic sense; if he had not been, he could not have made one court the scapegoat for a collection of horrors ranging from the oppressions of feudalism to the austerities of the Thebaid, a thing he avowedly did. In the Preface to "A Connecticut Yankee" he wrote: "It is not pretended that these laws and customs existed in England in the sixth century; no, it is only pretended that inasmuch as they existed in the English and other civilizations of far later times, it is safe to consider that it is no libel upon the sixth century to suppose them to have been in practice in that day also. One is quite justified in inferring that whatever one of these laws and customs was lacking in that remote time, its place was competently filled by a worse one." Whether or not he means it, Twain here says that the abuses of feudalism must by logical necessity have been in existence in a pre-feudal society; and even if we do not press that point, we have here the nineteenth-century dogma of progress, that every century must be better than the one before, stated in its most naive absurdity. Mark Twain had many virtues, but the sense of the past cannot have been one of them.

BASIL DAVENPORT.

New York City.



"I want to know how the detective story I'm writing is going to turn out."

We'll Go to See It

SIR:—It is quite evident that the recent pleas in your magazine for motion pictures that come up to a higher standard than has previously existed have not gone unheeded by the imaginative gentlemen who control such matters in Hollywood. The other evening while witnessing a performance of the film "Kentucky" I was pleasantly surprised to see the lovely Loretta Young, fingering the pages of a periodical. I say "pleasantly surprised" because the movies seem rarely to give the impression that people do or even can read. My surprise became even greater when I recognized the cover of *The Saturday Review*, standing out in all the brilliant glory of technicolor.

Surely, this is a supreme step on the long road toward what Mr. Wanger has so happily called "more intelligent and stronger pictures."

EARL J. DIAS.

New Bedford, Mass.

Henry Miller Shreve

SIR:—I am gathering material for a biography of Captain Henry Miller Shreve (1785-1851), Mississippi River steamboat designer and inventor, and would appreciate hearing from any one who has letters to or from Captain Shreve or any other material relating to him.

JANET ROSENWALD.

124 W. 79 St.
New York City.

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"The story walks its straight road to laughter and tears and family affections" . . . (From the jacket of "Song of Years.")

American Dream

SONG OF YEARS. By Bess Streeter Aldrich. New York: D. Appleton-Century. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by WALLACE STEGNER

MRS. ALDRICH'S new novel takes no liberties with the traditions of pioneer fiction, and attempts no revaluations of the men and women who settled the Middle West. Her men are industrious, loyal, simple, with an optimistic eye on the future and their minds full of the American Dream; her women are helpful, self-sacrificing, simple, with an infinite capacity for labor, suffering, tenderness, and sympathy. There is nothing complex or soul-searching about their emotions or ideas. The incidents of the book are the well-worn episodes of frontier life whose changes have already been rung in fifty novels: the primitive beginnings, the hardships, the few cherished hours of recreation, the growth of straggling villages into towns and cities, the Civil War, and woven through the social history of a period the intimate chronicle of weddings, births, deaths. Death is always in what Archibald MacLeish calls its "disguise as grief"; it never touches too close to the central characters. It takes a friend, not too intimate; a brother-in-law, not too valuable; a neighbor, not too important. When death has seemed to come too close, and the hero is reported dead, Mrs. Aldrich charitably revives him in time to marry the youngest daughter of the book's principal family, and scotch the villain.

Obviously there is nothing here that is new. Herbert Quick told much the same story in "Vandemark's Folly," only taking his hero a few miles further West. But if there is nothing new here, neither is there anything troublesome, nothing which might cause a reader to wrestle with profundity. And in that lies one great appeal that Mrs. Aldrich has for thousands of readers.

The story is centered in the Martin family, pioneers in the Red Cedar Valley in Iowa. It chronicles the growth of the towns of Waterloo and Cedar Falls (here called Prairie Rapids and Sturgis Falls) from 1855 to the end of the Civil War. Instead of the stirring events of settlement, we have here the events of that neighborly female society which produces most of Mrs. Aldrich's large following.

She handles only the easy emotions, but with complete mastery and conviction. Without literary capers, the story walks its straight road to laughter and tears and family affections and comradeships and griefs. When she approaches an emotional scene, the author herself feels it so strongly that the emotion carries. This novel will wet many eyes. That too is a reason for the popularity of Mrs. Aldrich's books.

There is nothing phony in this sentiment. It comes from the heart. There is nothing phony either about the romantic view of love, the exalted conception of the pioneer, the unshakable belief in the homely virtues. Mrs. Aldrich speaks for and to those millions whose lives are bounded by the domestic world of simple faiths and neighborly kindness. She puts the seal of validation on the beliefs of thousands of women. The world pictured here is romantically misted, its characters and their implications are sentimentalized to softness, but they fit the fantasy-life of their audience as a piston fits its cylinder. This is profoundly feminine fiction, and it does its job perfectly.

A Revenger's Tragedy

ADDRESS UNKNOWN. By Kressmann Taylor. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1939. $1.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

"ADDRESS UNKNOWN" first appeared as a short story in *Story* magazine, causing, we are told, the sale of an unprecedented number of copies of the issue containing it. It is now published by itself as a small book, a form which it has quite strength enough to support. It is an ingenious, powerful, artificial, and disquieting piece of work. In form, it is a correspondence between Martin Schulse, an Aryan German who returns to the Fatherland in 1932 after a lifetime in America, and Max Eisenstein, an American Jew, his business associate and lifelong friend. As the letters continue, we see the German, at first doubtful of Hitler, revert completely to Nordic savagery, acclaiming Nazism and denouncing Jews. And then comes a letter in which he confesses to Eisenstein that the latter's sister (whose lover he had once been) had come to his door seeking protection from a body of Storm Troopers whom he could see turning in at the gate; that he had closed his door against her in self-preservation; and that she had been killed. The form of the story becomes a weakness here; for though in all human certainty Schulse could only have died with her, it seems incredible that any man would have reported himself in so unheroic a light; he would merely have told Eisenstein that he had information that his sister was dead. The complete revelation is of course necessary to the story; for the essence of the story is what follows, Eisenstein's ingenious and horrible revenge.

A revenger's tragedy is always rather uncomfortable; one cannot enjoy it with a clear conscience. No one can fail to sympathize with Shylock when he ends his great speech, "And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" but when Portia steps between Antonio and Shylock's butcher-knife, who would be the one to volunteer the suggestion made by Baroness Blixen's African servant, that by cutting with a red-hot blade he could manage to shed no blood? It is possible to show the very vengefulness and cruelty of the oppressed as the last injury done by the oppressor, as Euripides so often does; the change in Hecuba, from a queen enthroned with sorrows to a ravening she-wolf, is the final condemnation of the Greeks; and Shylock's quality of ruined greatness is felt as the damning charge against the Christians. But such a conception requires a greater depth of characterization than is possible in the form the author has here set himself; and without it, "Address Unknown" remains a stunt.

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Science in This Century

BACKGROUND TO MODERN SCIENCE. Edited by Joseph Needham and Walter Pagel. New York: The Macmillan Company (Cambridge University Press). 1938. $2.

Reviewed by JOHN HODGDON BRADLEY

ACCORDING to the authors of this book, the history of science is an important but neglected branch of learning. Professional historians have been busy chiefly with politics and wars, professional scientists chiefly with observations and experiments. Consequently, what has passed for the history of science has been largely a stringing together of individual biographies, without any serious attempt to show the relationship of scientific thought to the social and economic background of the time.

"Background to Modern Science" is part of a recent attempt at Cambridge University to set forth the history of science as a phase of the history of civilization. It is a compilation of ten lectures delivered at Cambridge by investigators who have themselves made fundamental contributions to science. Rutherford, Eddington, Bragg, Haldane—to mention but four of the ten distinguished authors—amply guarantee its authenticity.

The book, however, is not a significant contribution to the task of depicting the growth of modern science against the social and economic background of the time. Readers desiring "social consciousness" in the current sense of the phrase will be disappointed. On the other hand, readers who can be content with authentic and not too lengthy résumés of progress in several fields of scientific investigation should find all these essays informative, and some of them extremely interesting and well written.

Dealing largely with the achievements of the forty-year period between 1895 and 1935, the book might better have been named "Foreground of Modern Science." Excepting the first chapter, which contrasts the deductive and the inductive methods of investigating nature, and the second chapter, which tells how the second method eventually triumphed over the first, the book is little concerned with the background to modern science. Throughout most of the chapters, indeed, the reader has a decided feeling of being at the front of modern science.

Ten fifty-minute lectures can hardly be expected to contain a definitive history of anything so broad as modern science. Several important sciences, in fact, are not even mentioned. Those which are treated—radioactivity, crystal physics, atomic structure, astronomy, physiology and pathology, parasitology, evolution, and genetics—are severely curtailed. Some of the authors practically limit their discussions to their own particular work and interests. Some in striving for completeness become in places rather too encyclopedic for the comfort of even a well-grounded lay reader.

These, however, are the unavoidable faults of a book that bites off more than it can chew. It must be said that for the most part the authors perform very admirably within their self-imposed limitations. Among the chapters on the physical sciences, "Forty Years of Atomic Theory," by F. W. Aston, is a gem of popular presentation of a difficult subject. "Forty Years of Evolution Theory," by R. C. Punnett, is equally outstanding among the chapters on the biological sciences. "Forty Years of Physiology and Pathology," by John A. Ryle (which actually deals with a hundred years of research on the human stomach), and "Forty Years of Parasitology and Tropical Medicine," by the late G. H. F. Nuttall (which deals with the fight against malaria and yellow fever), should be full of interest for almost any educated person.

British scientists have a deserved reputation for excellence in both investigation and popular exposition. Any serious reader who has not yet discovered the reason for this reputation can do so with profit and entertainment in this book.

Editor's Essays

THE LITERARY LIFE AND THE HELL WITH IT. By Whit Burnett. New York: Harper & Bros. 1939. $2.50.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

WHIT BURNETT has a hell of a lot of nerve. In the years since he and Martha Foley turned out the first issue of *Story* on a second-hand Hungarian multigraphing machine in Vienna, he has probably fathered more rejection slips than any other man now in America. A good proportion of them must have gone to the ambitious young reporters who, because of reputed tastes for pure literature and willingness to work overtime, are normally assigned by city editors to review books. He has now offered these doubtless moral, but nevertheless human, young men a chance to take a poke at him; and to make sure they will not miss the opportunity, has attached his name to a volume of light, humorous essays, probably the most unpopular literary form now being written and the easiest in which to pick flaws. On top of that he has had the book illustrated by Ludwig Bemelmans, the only cartoonist who ever put Rabelais in a comic strip.

Under the circumstances, his protective protests that he is not writing essays and that he is not and never has known intimately more than one humorist (if getting swizzled on champagne in a Salt Lake City hotel with Ring Lardner can be called intimacy with a humorist) are likely to be received with Bronx cheers from the gallery. To a certain extent they will be justified. Whit Burnett is not much of a humorist, or perhaps he merely has an insufficient stock of such tales as the one about Gertrude Stein being delivered at the Swedish Maids Employment Bureau by an elevator man who could recognize at a glance where his passengers belonged. When most of the stories in this book arrive at the point where a brilliant and unexpected situation should appear they wander off into something else—discussion of the difficulties of printing English in Mallorca (where they have no Ws) for example, or the discovery of a hitherto unsuspected resemblance between Chekhov and Grover Cleveland.

Pinchot

Whit Burnett

As a matter of fact, the disclaimer of essay-writing is pretty well justified, too. Addison would have some trouble finding anything familiar in the form of the nineteen short pieces that compose this volume; so would Poe; so would Macaulay. But Christopher North would not; and if there exist in America any number of persons who are still pleased by rambling, diffuse, educated, informative gossip which combines odd sidelights on literary people with such topics as the sizes of French beer-glasses and the habits of New Jersey cops, this will be a treasured item to them.

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Notes on Baker Street

BY CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

LIKE all other learned and scientific societies, the Baker Street Irregulars exchange notes of research about this time of year. They are too wise to hold stated meetings, which would belie their name and take the fun out of their indoctrinated amateurishness; and the accumulated records of their memoirs and adventures have been lying in a publisher's drawer now for several years pending certain final perfections of accuracy. If you must know, one of the niceties that has delayed them is to obtain an accurate reckoning of how much Sherlock Holmes spent on hansom cab fares in his journeys as described by the Doctor. A gentleman in London was commissioned to itinerate all these journeys as exactly as possible (by taxi), keep account of the cost, and make a prorated diminution according to price scales in the 80's and 90's. Then, however, the difficulty began. Was this envoy to have his actual expenses paid by the Club (which has no treasury)? or should he be reimbursed only what the travels cost Holmes?

The overhead charges of literary work (are you listening, Income Tax?) have never been properly appreciated by outsiders.

However, the album in question will eventually appear. Its title will be *221 B*, it will have 221 pages and an additional B page, and will (I hope) be set in Baskerville type.

As evidence of the affectionate fidelity of the clan, mark a letter from Mr. P. M. Stone of Waltham, Mass., who reports that he has loaned to the Waltham Public Library his own collection of Sherlockiana, on show there until January 28. There are about 75 items, he says, including the excessively rare original *Study in Scarlet* (Beeton's Annual, '87), and monographs, drawings, autograph letters, bookplates, posters, theatre programs, whatnots of all kinds relating to the Master. "It will be interesting to see," says Mr. Stone, "how many enthusiasts, in an industrial city of our type, turn out to reacquaint themselves with an idol of their youthful days."

It has always surprised me that so few of the Baker Street investigators go back to one of the prime sources, viz., the *Strand Magazine* of '91 to '93. A careful study of the *Strand* text is prerequisite for any solid Sherlockian scholarship. Consider the problem faced by Mr. Greenhough Smith, editor of the *Strand*, when his most successful feature, the first 12 of the *Adventures*, came to an end in June '92. Anyone familiar with the anxieties of magazines must be amused and instructed by Mr. Smith's valiant efforts to fill the gap while Dr. Watson was taking a six-months' recuperation. July '92 a short editorial note remarked "It will be observed that this month there is no detective story relating the adventures of the celebrated Mr. Sherlock Holmes. We are glad to be able to announce that there is to be only a temporary interval. . . . Powerful detective stories by other eminent writers will be published."

Shrewdly enough the *Strand* followed this up, the next month, with an illustrated interview (one of a famous series, done by Harry How) showing—yes, we must name him, I suppose—Conan Doyle in his home at South Norwood, and giving the first intimation that Dr. Joseph Bell in Edinburgh, one of Doyle's old teachers, was the suggestion-germ of Holmes's character. But the powerful detective stories by other hands were not so easy to find. Dick Donovan's series of *Romances from a Detective's Case Book* were a terrible let-down, though Mr. Donovan was given a strong build-up as the author of *Tracked to Doom, Caught at Last, Who Poisoned Hetty Duncan?* etc. Dick Donovan was in a tough spot, and felt it, as you can see by the way he tried to imitate the characteristic opening strokes of the Watson method. Observe Mr. Donovan in the September '92 issue:—

> It was a bitter night in December, now years ago, that a young and handsome man called upon me in great distress, to seek my advice and assistance. It was the third day after Christmas, and having dined, and dined well, I had ensconced myself in my favourite easy chair, before a cheerful fire, and was engaged in the perusal of Charles Dickens's "Cricket on the Hearth," when my visitor was unceremoniously ushered into the room. He held his dripping hat in his hand, and the heavy top-coat he wore was white with snow, etc., etc.

The intention was excellent, but Oh what a difference.

The series called *Shafts from an Eastern Quiver* tried hard to give some continuity of thrill; and Grant Allen wrote *The Great Ruby Robbery* (illustrated by Sidney Paget, who did Holmes and Watson for the *Strand*; in spite of villainous engraving it was a notable job) and even Greenhough Smith himself lent a hand with a pedestrian mystery of his own. Some Baker Street student should monograph Greenhough Smith, editor of the magazine for so many years. I have always respected him for having had the gumption to rehash some of Bataille's great French criminal trials, though his treatment was heavily uninspired. Anyhow as Watson's first regular editor he deserves our homage. May it not have been Watson's own suggestion (see *The Five Orange Pips*) that impelled Smith to get a sea story by Clark Russell to help fill in? It's in the August number of that year, *A Nightmare of the Doldrums*, with the editorial blurb: "A Terrible Story of the Sea, only to be read by people of strong nerves."

Mr. Greenhough Smith must have been a happy man, one day in that autumn of '92, when the MS. of *Silver Blaze* was actually in his hands and he could put a teaser in the November issue:—

> Next month will appear the first of the new series of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." Admirers of that eminent detective are also informed that "The Sign of Four," the story of the wonderful adventure by which he gained his reputation, can now be obtained at this office. Price 3s 6d.

That was a little disingenuous, but one remembers that Watson had sold the *Study in Scarlet* outright (for £25) to another house, and there was no way Newnes, the *Strand* publisher, might reprint it. He probably would have if he could: in the *Strand* for December '91,

Greenhough Smith editing Sherlock Holmes stories (*Strand Magazine*, 1892)

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Turf Guards Press

"Club Types" by H. Maxwell Beerbohm (*Strand Magazine,* 1892)

for instance, he printed "A Vision of Saint Nicholas, by C. C. Moore" with no intimation that it had ever appeared anywhere before.

But Mr. Greenhough Smith's wits were keenly at work during those difficult months while his readers were hallooing for more Sherlock. Have a look at the September, November and December 1892 issues. There were three extraordinary cartoon features, called *Club Types*; a series of deliciously mischievous little figures representing the characteristic foibles of famous London social groups, each club in its own humor. They were done by a young man who must have been still an undergraduate at Oxford? They were signed first H. M. Beerbohm, and then H. Maxwell Beerbohm. These, which so few collectors have ever spotted, were the *Strand* reader's compensation for doing without Sherlock.

Up From the Needle

By Edgar W. Smith

The reputation attributed to Sherlock Holmes for addiction to cocaine and morphine has served, unfortunately, to obscure the name he more justly deserves for a sound and civilized attitude toward the venial narcotic alcohol. In the early days of his career, when cases were few, it is beyond denying that he turned to the crystalline alkaloids for solace: he tells us in his own words that he found the influence so transcendently stimulating and clarifying to the mind as to make him careless of the ravages inevitable upon his body and soul. Yet we know that he was never a slave of the vice, in the clinical sense of the term, for despite indulgence resulting on one occasion in doses of a seven per cent cocaine solution "three times a day for many months," he was always able to cast off the spell, and to find inspiration instead in the exhilaration of the chase.

The fact that Holmes's resort to the lethal drugs was sporadic and voluntary is proof in itself that his reputation for addiction is undeserved. We have further evidence that Watson's doggedly virtuous urgings, abetted progressively by the increasing importance of Holmes's professional preoccupations, resulted at last in his abandoning the practice entirely. How long the reformation took we do not know, but we can feel quite certain that by the time the zenith of his powers had been attained, and queen and potentate and pontiff were inclining themselves before him in suppliance for his aid, the Master had learned without remorse and without regret to reach for the gasogene instead of the needle.

This noble implement of aqueous dilution, gone in a modern age with the lamplight and the four-wheeler, stands symbolic of a simpler and more wholesome field of indulgence in which Sherlock Holmes acquitted himself intelligently and well. His tastes were catholic and comprehensive: he loved the grape as well as the barley, and he loved them both in their naturally fermented states as well as in their distillate and more potent forms. In their use as gastronomic adjuncts, he was logical and precise—he had the great good sense, as we are told in *A Scandal in Bohemia,* to wash down a plate of cold roast beef with a draught of foaming, plebeian beer; but when it came to accompanying the oysters and the brace of grouse consumed in *The Sign of the Four,* we are gratified to know that he insisted upon something a little choice in the way of white wine. That he did not ignore the concentrated and more fiery spirit, for the convivial as distinct from the gustatory effect, we are given abundant evidence: as early, again, as *The Sign of the Four* we find him offering Athelney Jones a whisky and soda, and we know, from *A Scandal in Bohemia,* that the spirit case sat handy in the corner, side by side with the gasogene itself.

Other references to Holmes's interest in the traditional drink of his countrymen appear in *The Red-Headed League* and *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor.* No deliberate restraint seems to have been put upon access to the store of the spirit maintained in the room, but always the indulgence is occasional and gracious, and never is it stigmatized by evidence of excessive or habitual use. In the *Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb* and *The Musgrave Ritual* a subtle change steals temporarily upon the Baker Street scene, for the dominant ingredient figuring in these tales becomes—perhaps with the advent of greater affluence—the somewhat more costly brandy. It was certainly with whisky, however, that Holmes filled his flask when he sallied forth in his quest of *The Naval Treaty,* and it was probably whisky again that he took from his hip to revive the fainting Watson in *The Adventure of the Empty House.*

But it is Holmes's taste in wines, after all, that excites our greatest interest and commands our greatest respect. Whisky is whisky, and beer is beer, and even the most ignorant may stumble upon the choicest and best and consume it appropriately in time and place. In the realm of the natural grape, however, a sense of discrimination is essential to even a modest reputation for *savoir boire,* and these qualities the Master possessed to a unique degree.

At base, his preferences were francophile. There was, of course, the single glass of port imbibed in *The Gloria Scott,* and the Imperial Tokay (from Franz Josef's special cellar in the Schoenbrunn) provided reluctantly in *His Last Bow* by the villain von Bork; but it was definitely to the Bordeaux and the Burgundies that Holmes's natural tastes were inclined. Surprisingly, for an Englishman of his generation, he seems to have shunned the hocks completely. Nowhere are the vintages of the Rhineland given mention, and we are led to wonder if, foreseeing the part he was to play in the Great War, he did not take it upon himself to set up a sort of individual boycott before the fact.

We can be sure, in any event, that the group of ancient and cobwebby bottles sent in by the confectioner in *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor* had seen their origin in some distant chateau in the Gironde, and that Holmes searched the labels beneath the accumulated dust to verify the fact of their local *mise en bouteille.* So, too, with the Beaune in *The Sign of the Four* which helped to incline the good Watson sentimentally toward Mary Morstan; we can assume—if Holmes shared the doctor's repast, as he presumably did—that he made sure of his hospice and his bottling before he partook.

The key to Holmes's whole philosophy in the art of drinking is to be found in an obscure passage in *The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger.* There, before setting out for South Brixton where a horribly mutilated beauty pondered self-destruction, he comments sagely to his companion on the futility of speculation when facts are lacking; then abruptly changes the subject. "There is a cold partridge on the sideboard, Watson, and a bottle of Montrachet. Let us renew our energies before we make a fresh call upon them."

Montrachet! It is a compliment to a

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noble vintage that Sherlock Holmes should have chosen it for restoration when his mind was troubled; that he should have come, even so late in life, to prefer it to hypodermic and gasogene alike. But it is a finer tribute still to the man himself, and to his wisdom and discernment, that he should have fixed upon what Courtépée has called, with delightful understatement, "le plus excellent vin blanc d'Europe." The presence of Montrachet on the Baker Street sideboard was, we must assume, a matter of studied and deliberate choice, and it stamps Sherlock Holmes indelibly with the hall-mark of *savant* and *connoisseur*.

And so we must regard him, whatever the foibles of his younger days and however late in life his elevation came. The man who drenched his veins with poison was not the real Holmes. Back in the rooms in Baker Street, we can be sure, the sense of the refined and the delicate asserted itself anew in Holmes's blood, and grew apace with the years.

Is the British Novel Dead?

(*Continued from page 4*)

but it is perhaps too like its predecessor to add much to one's estimate of Mr. Large's range. The outer novel, however, with its casual but shrewd picture of a thoroughly "modern" household, seems new and promising.

A sombre but powerful talent which has recently made some mark is that of Mr. Gwyn Jones, who has two historical pieces and one novel of modern Manchester to his credit in the last three years. In his case one rather wonders "whether," as they said of Roderick Hudson, "he can keep it up," for the subjects which seem most congenial to his imagination are of a rather special kind, and perhaps do not exist in sufficient quantity to afford him opportunity for a considerable body of work. It remains to be seen whether he can continue to discern and select his topics without artificiality, or alternatively adapt his talent to a different material. The modern novel, a sombre study of a weakling who murdered a prostitute, did not quite come off; but "Richard Savage" and "Garland of Bays" were striking. Both were stories of real historical characters, "Garland of Bays" being the biography of the Elizabethan playwright Robert Greene; both were studies of wild young men of poetic genius. In these novels the historical background was not merely authentically but sumptuously indicated; in both, the wild young men of genius really appeared to have genius. This is much rarer in a novel than it perhaps sounds to the general reader; but anyone who has ever attempted to write a novel containing a clever person, much more a genius, will readily admit the pains that person cost him in characterization, and the dissatisfaction he feels with the result. The reason for this is, I think, that while it is not necessary that a novelist should have undergone the same experiences as his characters in order to be able to write about them, it is necessary, it is indeed quite essential, that he should have experienced the same emotions as his characters, and to the same degree, though roused by different objects. Now the emotions of a genius are of a range and intensity at which the average novelist must necessarily boggle. I am paying Mr. Jones a high compliment, then, in saying that his Robert Greene, though a trifle too lurid for my conception of that writer, might well have been Shakespeare's contemporary and written the poems, plays, and tracts we find in the catalogues after his name.

Mr. Rex Warner is another young novelist whose books, after reviewing, I retain on my shelf; the hardened reviewer will understand the merit implied. The first novel of Mr. Warner's that I read was "The Wild Goose Chase," a decidedly Rabelaisian but symbolic fantasy which opened quite gorgeously, then fell away into a slough of boring futuristic battles. The hero sets out in search of his ideal, the wild geese; after many adventures he reaches the city where he is told the wild goose resides —or perhaps I should say, presides as a kind of deity. The goose, however, when discovered, is stuffed—which gives one a nice phase of derision for many modern phenomena. Mr. Warner's 1938 novel, "The Professor," is an extremely poignant study of the liberal professor, president of a republic which is betrayed to violence without by treachery within —and, Mr. Warner seems to suggest, by the very liberalism of the professor. It is a sufficiently topical subject; Mr. Warner handles it in a deliberately simple prose which sometimes rises, in the ideological discussions between the various symbolic characters, to real dignity. I see that Mr. Frank Swinnerton, in his survey of last year's novels, calls this book "tendentious"; I would rather call it political. Mr. Warner is essentially a political writer, in the wide sense of the word; he is concerned with systems of government and their effects.

Another new novelist of some interest, who varies between the politico-economic field and the more intensive domestic study, is Miss Lettice Cooper, who in "Private Enterprise" and "We Have Come to a Country" gave pictures of the economic depression in an industrial Yorkshire town, from the point of view of the employer and the unemployed respectively. In "The New House" she wrote a multiplicity domestic novel, out of the ordinary by reason of its peculiarly subtle analysis of motive; her latest work, "National Provincial," again takes the wider field, and presents a cross-section of life in an industrial town, viewed in its political aspect. Miss Cooper's special quality seems likely to be her relation of the huge political problems of the day to the adjustment struggles in the individual unconscious.

A novelist hitherto political, who has broken new ground very successfully in his latest novel, is Mr. Alec Brown. His "Daughters of Albion" and "Breakfast in Bed" irritated me; they had intimations of perception and form, but seemed a trifle flabby, because based on the uncertain foundation of a revolutionaryism of an armchair and sedentary kind. But when I read "Margareta" I admitted frankly that I had misjudged Mr. Brown's abilities, for in this novel he begins to reveal his true powers. It is a novel of peasant life in Jugoslavia in contrast with modern civilization, of the ageless attachment of Margareta to the soil, and of the temporary escape of her unhappy husband to the world of machinery he loves, in Detroit. The Jugoslavian landscape, with which Mr. Brown has a long familiarity, is depicted with luminous beauty; the character of Margareta, a woman as ruthless as life itself and as vital, has unexpectedly subtle touches. Altogether, I now definitely include Mr. Brown in my list of young English novelists with a possible future.

I am in doubt whether to include our "proletarian" novelists in this list or no, as to me they seem to belong to a passing rather than to an approaching phase. The work of Mr. James Hanley has established its reputation over here, but Mr. Frank Tilsley's grim and poignant studies of unemployment and the less agreeable aspects of capitalism are perhaps less known than they deserve. Mr. Tilsley is an uneven and, to those who believe in his talent, sometimes an exasperatingly careless writer; but "The Plebeian's Progress" and "I'd Hate to Be Dead" and "She Was There, Too" all deserve to be read for their disillusioned but vigorous presentation of contemporary economics. Leslie Halward's proletarian short stories, and his first novel, "The Money's All Right," have a warmer tone than Mr. Tilsley's fiction; this is owing, I believe, to their deeper characterization, for all his people are particularly real and living.

The generation now rising into literary notice is not the thinned and stunned generation of the War, it is abundant and various. Though the prose of the ten novelists I have listed is perhaps similar in its terse lucidity, and their technique too has certain basic similarities, legacies of the pioneer work of the novelists of the 1920's, their subject matter is very various, including as it does science, history, politics, economics, the domestic, and the sinister, and I do not yet find it possible to discern the unifying tendency which makes a "period." External events may perhaps provide one. The novelists of the 1920's were unified by the pressure of events into a clearly discernible "school"; economic pressure from without, Freudian enlightenment from within, gave them a theme and an attitude. A

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noticeable feature of the mass of ordinary honest but undistinguished English fiction of the 1920's was its regionalism. The depression struck at England trade by trade; and since in England trades are regional—pottery inhabits the Five Towns, cotton Lancashire, cloth the West Riding of Yorkshire, shipbuilding the Tyne—each region in turn felt the impact of the slump, became conscious of itself as a region and tended to produce its novelist. Meanwhile, the more perceptive writers tried to relate these happenings to a politico-economic theory of a general kind. Now, since 1933, the economic problem has sunk in importance in England compared with the national. A national catastrophe may, the national danger almost certainly must, start a new phase in English literature, for though creative art deals with the eternal verities, it expresses them through contemporary symbols. What shape that phase will take it is not yet possible to prophesy; but that England has at her disposal, to express her spirit and her life, an abundance of young, vigorous, various, literary talent, must be clear to every impartial observer of the English literary scene.

Phyllis Bentley, now lecturing in America, is the author of "Inheritance," "Sleep in Peace," and other novels, most of them concerned with life in her native Yorkshire. She has also written numerous book reviews and articles in the English press.

Ideology

By Arthur Guiterman

ACCORDING to Kentucky ideology,
The mint-leaves in a julep must be bruised;
Virginia holds this practice past apology,
For ideologies are much confused.

A pumpkin pie is best with potent spices,
Pronounce the ideologists of Maine;
But this is heresy and other vices,
Rhode Island ideologists complain.

The ideology of ancient Sparta
Approved successful thefts; but later times,
The Constitution, courts and Magna Charta
Had ideologies that called them crimes.

There used to be conclusions, thoughts and notions
Unbound by crooked etymologies,
But now we may not even have emotions
Except as parts of ideologies.

Oh, writers, pedants, students of psychology,
Professors old, reporters fresh and green,
Please let us hear no more of "ideology;"
The word "ideas" expresses all you mean.

The Man Who Lost America

LORD NORTH. By W. Baring Pemberton. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1939. $6.

Reviewed by Joseph R. Strayer

ANYONE interested in the great game of politics will enjoy reading this description of the sport as it was played under eighteenth century rules. Mr. Pemberton has condensed a considerable body of material into a witty and well-written biography. If it is a purely political biography, that is less the limitation of the author than of the subject. North was a politician; he understood the House of Commons perfectly, but he had no comprehension of anything outside the sacred walls. He accepted the existing system, he was annoyed by any attempts to alter it, and he never understood the changes which were taking place in his own country, much less those which were occurring in America.

Mr. Pemberton, while admitting North's weaknesses, feels that he has been underrated. But the author's efforts at rehabilitating his hero are not very successful. His greatest achievement is to prove that North was at least a second-rate politician and not merely a royal errand-boy. He suggests that North must have had some financial ability, since he introduced fourteen successive budgets, but the one example which he gives of the minister's fiscal policy is not calculated to arouse our admiration. As for North's other policies, they were those of a relatively honest and completely unimaginative conservative. He accepted the interference of George III in politics because William III had interfered in politics; he wanted to tax the American colonies because earlier Parliaments had asserted their right to tax the colonies. North's long tenure of office proves nothing about his ability; it merely shows that the Whig oligarchy was hopelessly divided.

Mr. Pemberton, either through sympathy or political conviction, tends to see everything through North's eyes. Since those eyes were never more than half open, some curious judgments result. The Opposition is composed of a shadowy group of figures who bear famous names, but who are always stupid, corrupt, and contemptible. Popular protests are always the work of unscrupulous demagogues, are never based on real grievances, and never represent the real feelings of the people. Majorities in the House are always secured by oral rather than pecuniary arguments. Yet this attitude, annoying as it is at times, does give us real insight into the mental processes of the Noble Lord in the Blue Ribbon. It is easier than ever to see why North lost America. It is rather difficult to understand why he didn't lose England as well.

BOOKS from CHAPEL HILL

THE following list is compiled from the complete list of books published by The University of North Carolina Press during the past several years. We regard these books as significant—and their reception by reviewers and the reading public shows that we are not alone in this opinion. Check up and see which you have read—and which you would like for us to send you.

FORTY ACRES AND STEEL MULES, by Herman Clarence Nixon. Illustrated.	$2.50
SOUTHERN REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES, by Howard W. Odum.	$4.00
THE WASTED LAND, by Gerald Johnson.	$1.50
CULTURE IN THE SOUTH, edited by W. T. Couch.	$4.00
THE COLLAPSE OF COTTON TENANCY, by Charles S. Johnson, Edwin R. Embree, and W. W. Alexander.	$.35
90° IN THE SHADE, by Clarence Cason.	$1.00
A PREFACE TO PEASANTRY, by Arthur Raper.	$3.50
THE ATTACK ON LEVIATHAN, by Donald Davidson.	$3.00
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY OF THE SOUTH, by Rupert B. Vance.	$2.50
UNIVERSAL EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH, 2 volumes, by Charles W. Dabney. Each	$3.75
WOMEN'S LIFE AND WORK IN THE SOUTHERN COLONIES, by Julia Cherry Spruill.	$5.00
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BACKWOODS AMERICA, by Charles Morrow Wilson.	$2.50
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JAMES LONGSTREET: Lee's War Horse, by H. J. Eckenrode and Bryan Conrad.	$1.00
DOROTHEA DIX: FORGOTTEN SAMARITAN, by Helen E. Marshall.	$3.50
SAUL, KING OF ISRAEL, by Victor Starbuck.	$2.50
PAUL LAURENCE DUNBAR, by Benjamin Brawley.	$1.00
SOJOURNER TRUTH, by Arthur Huff Fauset.	$1.00
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THE AMERICAN STATE UNIVERSITY: ITS RELATION TO DEMOCRACY, by Norman Foerster.	$2.50
THE SUPREME COURT AND THE COMMERCE CLAUSE, by Felix Frankfurter.	$1.00
A HISTORY OF ARGENTINA, by Ricardo Levene, translated and edited by W. S. Robertson.	$4.00
A HISTORY OF COLOMBIA, by Jesus Maria Henao and Gerardo Arrubla, translated and edited by J. Fred Rippy.	$4.00
MEXICAN FOLK PLAYS, by Josephina Niggli.	$2.50

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Exploring the Word

A DICTIONARY OF AMERICAN ENGLISH ON HISTORICAL PRINCIPLES. Compiled at the University of Chicago under the editorship of Sir William A. Craigie and James R. Hulbert. Part V. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. 1938. $4.

Reviewed by LOUISE POUND

OF the twenty or more fascicles that will constitute the completed Dictionary of American English the fifth, bringing to an end the first volume, came from the press in December, 1938. Its label, Chub-Eel to Corn Patch, is not so exciting as that of the second part, Baggage Smasher to Blood, or of the third, Blood and Thunder to Butterfly, yet it does not lack American flavor. There appears with the fascicle the Preface for the first volume, with its timely reminder of the purpose of the dictionary. The editors reaffirm that its chief aim is to include not only words or phrases which are apparently of American origin, or have greater currency here than elsewhere, but also every word denoting something which has a real connection with the development of the country and the life of the people. It strives therefore to exhibit the features that distinguish the language of the American colonies and of the United States from that of the rest of the English-speaking world, and in addition it includes considerable material that is common to both sides of the Atlantic. Too strict demarcation between British and American English should not be drawn anyway. British dictionaries include New World neologisms that have been taken over and made part of the language of England, and the heritage of Old World words having characteristic American associations should be included in an American dictionary, if it is to give an historical picture of the national life.

No doubt the patriotic are disappointed that locutions of vernacular creation in the present century, of which such a welter is upon us, have been excluded from the new dictionary. Thus *alibi* in its American sense is not entered, nor *date* in its latest meanings. *Barbecue* is entered only as a social gathering, often serving as a political meeting, at which the distinctive fare is an animal or animals roasted or broiled in the open air. The Barbecue, Bar-Bee-Cue, Bar-B-Q stands along today's streets and highways have to be left out of account. A definite terminus for the entries was made necessary by limitations of time and financing. The end of the first century of the Union, which was also about the end of the frontier period, seemed to the editors the most practicable. Probably a picture of the progress of the country as shown by its continuous need of new words or modifications of old words for its new landscape, its flora and fauna, and its new products and institutions will be all the clearer for its unconcern with the present.

The word explorer may start anywhere and find much to fascinate him. Facts about familiar words catch the attention. One learns that *cent* was a name proposed for the coin in 1782 and adopted officially by the Continental Congress in 1786. *Civilizee*, liked and used by Walt Whitman, was not his coinage but appeared in the *New York Observer* in 1849. One reads of the appearance of *circuit rider* and *cliff dweller*. *Cloudburst* is found as early as 1817. *C.O.D.* originated in the New York Office of the Adams Express Company. It was used in the *Rocky Mountain News* in 1863. *Coldsnap* is illustrated from 1776, *coeducation* from 1852. *Class* in the sense of students designated by the year of graduation, and its derivatives *class day, class book*, etc., are Americanisms, it seems.

The editors announced in advance that the inclusion of slang and dialect words would be restricted to those terms of early date and special prominence; and few such terms appear. *Contraption* is entered as dialectal, *conniption fit* as colloquial, and *come-uppance* is unlabeled. *Beer slinger, biscuit shooter,* and the progeny of *big (big-head, talk, bug, fish, gun)* are labeled slang. *Absquatulate* is followed by a note that it was later superseded by *skedaddle*. Continuing the process of curtailment, the twentieth century has replaced these by *skidoo* and *scram*. It is noteworthy that the dated quotations in the dictionary are not as a rule from classic literature. Until the contemporary era writers wrote pretty much in the purist tradition. They avoided scrupulously the new or unestablished Americanisms. Naturally the less literary books proved more valuable as sources of material.

It is hard to give up the puristic attitude in lexicography as in writing. The editors of the new dictionary have done well, I believe, to include expressions like *agoing, ary, ax* for *ask, acrost,* though some have looked askance at the practice. It is to be hoped that as they proceed they will become more rather than less liberal.

The makers of the new American dictionary have met the difficult problems of the selection of words, and of dating, defining, and illustrating with admirable editorial intelligence. They deserve the praise that scholars have awarded them.

R. A. J. Walling's latest Mr. Tolefree story . . . laid in an ancient chantery is **THE CORPSE WITH THE BLISTERED HAND,** of which Will Cuppy writes: "Accept no substitute. This is one of his slickest cases." $2. *A Morrow Mystery*

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 252)

APHRA BEHN—
THE LOVER IN FASHION

My heart your empire now disdains,
And frown or smile all's one to me;
The slave has broke his servile chains,
And spite of all your pride is free
From the tyrannic slavery.
. . . . . .
I found your rebel heart unkind,
And vanity had made you blind.

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Runyon's Broadway

THE DAMON RUNYON OMNIBUS: GUYS AND DOLLS, MONEY FROM HOME, BLUE PLATE SPECIAL. By Damon Runyon. New York: Blue Ribbon Books. 1939. 98 cents.

Reviewed by FLETCHER PRATT

THE three volumes of stories here united offer a large-sized sample of an author who is beginning to cause some perplexity in more literary circles, if for no other reason than that his faults lie so near the surface as to be identifiable by any student in a short story seminar. The plots usually pivot on sentiment, coincidence, or both, and include such venerable platitudes as the one about the southern belle with a single racehorse which must win to save her from penury, and the one about the little child who makes a bunch of ten-minute eggs weep into their whisky. The background of all the stories is restricted in space to the junction of Broadway and Seventh Avenue, in time to the bridge of years connecting 1929 with the New Deal, and in grammar to the present tense. Even the Broadway dialect, which he writes better than anyone else, is not always accurately caught—he mishandles "to boff," for instance, makes "to scrag" a common part of speech instead of a conscious archaism, and does not appear to be aware of the monotonous frequency of "take a powder."

Admit all this; admit also Mr. Runyon's debt to the Van Bibber stories and O. Henry—and there is some explaining to do, for nothing in the above catalogue accounts for his unquestionable success. Damon Runyon's career suggests the possession of qualities considerably beyond a good ear for common speech.

The clearest of these is the ability to record the permanent facts of that fascinating and meretricious Broadway existence of which Walter Winchell gives us the daily ephemera. Runyon reproduces not only the rhythms of speech but also the rhythm of life of a special world. If his stories are sentimental, it is at least partly because the kind of people he is writing about can always work up a few tears over the last line of "Silver Threads among the Gold." If coincidence plays a large part, it is because there are more charms for conciliating the jujus of fortune sold on 42nd St., than in equatorial Africa.

There is, in fact, an underlying fidelity to the subject in his work; a fidelity missing from the ordinary cheap magazine stories with which his seem to belong. This becomes clear from an examination not of the central themes of the stories in this collection, but of the details that surround them. Girls in the foreground of the Runyon stories occasionally choose love in a cottage, but one is justified in believing that these cases were selected because the girls in the background are far more likely to get that way over a guy with a potbelly and a good business in needle beer. Gangster and cop may save each other's lives in a moment of emotional reflex, but in the next moment each is thinking how he can best cash in on the other's gratitude. Evil is quite apt to prosper like the green bay tree—or rather there is no such thing as evil, there is only life, in a bewildering maze of manifestations without any absolute standards, a life of which Runyon is the inescapably accurate Samuel Pepys if one can understand the references hidden behind such names as Waldo Winchester, Missouri Martin, Jimmy Brannigan, Skush O'Brien, and The Brain.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
ARROGANT ALIBI *C. Daly King* (Appleton-Century: $2.)	Violent deaths in flood-bound Connecticut mansion pit Insp. Lord against numerous impeccable alibis.	Puzzle of the 1st Class, with oceans of erudition for those that like it, and swift action for them as don't.	Prize baffler
CAUSE FOR ALARM *Eric Ambler* (Knopf: $2.)	English engineer on munitions job in Italy becomes center of international plot. Skin saved by two interesting intrigantes.	Unsurpassed for slippery intrigue, totalitarian villainy, exciting chases, hairbreadth escapes, and general air of authenticity.	Excellent
DEATH PLAYS SOLITAIRE *R. L. Goldman* (Coward-McCann. $2.)	Murders of criminal lawyer, bank robber, and dead ditto's moll unraveled by reporter Rufus Reed and his boss, Editor Clume.	Ranks high in mobster class of mysteries. Tough talk and action restrained and convincing. Capital puzzle with smash finish.	Very good
THE CORPSE WITH THE BLISTERED HAND *R. A. J. Walling* (Morrow: $2.)	Reputed medieval hoard in Cotswold mansion cause of two murders solved by Mr. Tolefree with customary aplomb.	Plot tends to run wild but is kept under control by charming background, tantalizing red-herrings, and shrewd detection.	Satisfactory

How Books Become Best-Sellers

THE editor of *The Saturday Review* delves into the private lives of "Anthony Adverse," "Gone With the Wind," "The Story of Ferdinand," etc., and presents an imposing array of facts and figures about their sales and promotion plans. A book that authors, bookstore clerks and lay readers will find both fascinating and instructive. Illustrated. Now on sale at all bookstores, only $1.

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Normal Criminals

BROTHERS IN CRIME. By Clifford R. Shaw, with the assistance of Henry D. McKay and James F. McDonald. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

THIS is a study of five brothers and their careers in delinquency and crime. These careers, in each instance, began in early childhood and continued for twelve to twenty years, despite the persistent efforts of public and private agencies to effect a rehabilitation. The brothers have spent more than a third of their 150 years of life in dependent, correctional, and penal institutions. Here are their official records, their case histories and their autobiographies, together with interpretive and analytical chapters.

The book, which comes from the Chicago Institute for Juvenile Research, is an outstanding contribution to the literature of crime prevention and treatment. Its method gives a clear picture and understanding not only of the beginnings but of the continuance and development of such careers from the first simple acts of stealing to the more serious crimes, like armed robbery, of later years.

The evidence of this very thorough investigation suggests strongly that social or environmental factors were far more potent in influencing the behavior of the five brothers than personality traits. The boys got started that way by living in a poverty-stricken family and neighborhood in the midst of the boys' gangs and criminal traditions. Their interests and ideals, their practices, and skills, were acquired from their social environment there. This informal training and education was continued by contact with other delinquents in the correctional institutions in which they spent so much of their childhood and youth. In none of the brothers was there ever discovered, from examinations and tests, any marked deviation from normal in respect to intelligence or physical condition. Dr. Shaw is of the opinion that the label of "psychopathic personality" is too readily applied to delinquents and criminals, and that such a diagnosis, even by experts, is too often biased by the widely held preconception that criminals *must* be psychopathic. Of these Martin brothers it is said that under other circumstances they probably would have become law-abiding citizens, with socially approved habits and attitudes. They had the misfortune of adjusting to the weaker and less conventional part of the community.

The happy ending is that four of them are now going straight, while the fifth, who is still in quod, has similar intentions. Earlier confinements in institutions for juvenile delinquents seem to have had little or no deterrent effect, but later and repeated incarcerations have taught them that crime does not pay. They may have made up their minds less on grounds of ethics than of expediency, deciding that employment would be preferable from the standpoint of hazard and interference with freedom. Jobs were found for the four in a position to take them, and new habits and attitudes are being formed, in harmony with the new manner of life. Employment is set down by the authors as the most effective method of treatment in these cases. The most successful method of preventing delinquency and crime is held to be the community approach, with emphasis on work with the gang and improvement of neighborhood conditions.

Mystery Fans Attention!

IF you have been complaining about the sameness of the fare offered you; if you are tired of spotting the criminal before you have reached page 42, you will be interested in a book that will be published next week. *It is not a mystery story*

Yet it is the story of the most famous (and the most mysterious) murder ever committed in this country. This murder has never been solved, although, as the author points out in an ingenious afterword which is printed in a separate pamphlet, the next few years may see evidence turned up that will at last make it possible to solve the case. Right now your guess is as good as anybody's.

As we have warned you, this is not a mystery story, but we think you will want to read it, because it is as gripping, exciting, and filled with action and suspense as any detective story you have ever read.

It is written as fiction, although it is based on careful research and an exhaustive study of the case. It tells the story of a historic murder, probes the mind of the man who committed it, and follows his desperate struggle to escape his pursuers in the greatest man hunt ever staged.

Its title is **The Man Who Killed Lincoln** and it is about John Wilkes Booth. It was written by Philip Van Doren Stern, and it will be published by Random House next Tuesday. 384 pages, $3.00

America and the League of Nations

THE UNITED STATES AND WORLD ORGANIZATION. By Denna Frank Fleming. New York: Columbia University Press. 1938. $4.

Reviewed by WILLIAM O. SCROGGS

IN a well-written and carefully documented volume Professor Fleming retells the story of the attempts of statesmen after the Great War to set up political machinery which would make another such war impossible. Whatever may be said of the short-sightedness of the Allied leaders at Versailles, it cannot be denied that they created in the League of Nations a structure carefully designed to preserve peace and promote freedom and progress throughout the world. Yet the results of these efforts have been woefully disappointing. Is this the fault of the League itself? Professor Fleming's answer is No. The League had kept faith with the member states; but its strongest members have not kept faith with the League. And the United States, the World Power which, more than any other, was responsible for the League idea, took alarm at its own creation and refused not only to become a member but declined for a time to have any communication with it whatever.

In spite of American abstention, the League grew in importance and reached the apex of its influence in 1925 with the conclusion of the Locarno pacts and the admission of Germany to membership. For several years thereafter Geneva was the real center of European politics. Even the United States became less suspicious and more coöperative, and by 1929 its relations with the League had become close and cordial. But in this same year came the great depression, and with it a rising tide of nationalism and a collapse, one by one, of the agencies of collective security.

In 1928 sixty-odd nations had solemnly renounced war as an instrument of national policy; in 1938 war was raging in Europe and Asia, and other wars in Africa and South America had barely ended. Meantime, the leading powers were engaged in a destructive race of armaments that was leading no one knew where. Professor Fleming carries the story of this collapse of world organization only down to 1933, when civilization had not sunk to its present sorry state; but even so he relates a disheartening tale of the rise and fall of an idea and an ideal. His sympathies are so strongly pro-League and his opinion of isolationists is so low that his work cannot be described as objective. To indicate the baseness of the motives of many anti-Leaguers in the United States, he diverges into a detailed account of the oil scandals of the Harding Administration which to many readers will seem a non-sequitur. Such emotional discursions, however, are rare and do not impair the inherent value of the work. While the author uncovers no new material, he has brought together facts from many sources and produced a highly readable account of one phase of American foreign relations in a crucial period of the world's history.

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Two Lyric Poets

RIDERS AT THE GATE. By Joseph Auslander. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. $1.75.

KINGS AND THE MOON. By James Stephens. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. **$1.60.**

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

THESE two volumes are similar in size and range; they have much the same subject matter; they are, with the exception of a few sonnets, almost orthodox lyrics, songs that supply their own music. Yet in tone and taste the two volumes have practically nothing in common.

Read superficially, the first volume is a far more impressive collection than the second. It glitters with striking figures and flashes with brisk, if not always appropriate, epithets; it has the sound, and something of the fury, of memorable verse. The title-poem, although much too long, has the ring of outrage keyed—or keyed up—to a dramatic ballad. But all too soon the reader is bogged down in a lush growth of pretty verbiage, strained conceits, a confusion of manipulated effects; and what looked like true poetry is seen to be nothing more than a smooth poetic jargon. According to the program announced, the poems "deal frankly and unpretentiously with the permanent provocations of love, death, and nature." But the volume is crammed with lines which deal anything but frankly with the subjects, and few contemporaries have succeeded in writing more pretentiously than Mr. Auslander, especially when he speaks of so simple an object as a locust in such grandiose strophes:

> He shapes the multisyllabled summer's chant
> To singular, that else were murmuring mist
> Of vowel and promiscuous consonant,
> O princely plagiarist!

Mr. Auslander has not achieved, as the blurb promises, a new significance; he does, however, express a contemporary social consciousness; he gives vent to a high-pitched anger against Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin, and a fervor for justice, the hope of the harassed individual. The attitude is right, but the tone is wrong. The poet is in love, not only with the eternal verities, but with the standard abstractions, with such established virtues as peace, April, "Lord Shakespeare," robins, the best Chinese poets, Kansas, falsetto, and democracy. Chiefly, however, he is in love with words, as he confesses in the revealing "Indolent Credo." This leads Mr. Auslander to compose many fine phrases and several silly ones. It leads him to bewilder the reader with unfulfilled expectations and wholly artificial figures of speech. In "Song," for example, the central image is continually changed and distorted. In the first line the moon is introduced with a sweeping bravura:

> I will mount with the moon her tremendous tidal horses,—

in the next verse the image and the direction are abruptly altered so that the poet may cry:

> My fate in love I will bind to the moon's great wheel,—

and in the last verse the moon has shrunk to a trinket, while the sun incongruously becomes a coin and a keepsake:

> . . . the sun sleeps in your pocket;
> I'll slip a string of stars around your wrist . . .

Such misdirection leads inevitably to metaphors as mixed and unintentionally comic as "A black hole in the heart applauds a bullet," and "The feathered implications time has crushed."

James Stephens also deals with "the permanent provocations," with the traditional commonplaces. But he does not rely on combinations of the "promiscuous consonant" nor does he, as Mr. Auslander does, attempt to unite the rose, poetry's stock property, with today's headline. The effect achieved is exactly the opposite of "Riders at the Gate." Here the first reading is deceptive; the lines are so simple as to seem banal, so unaffected as to seem sentimental. But the simplicity is attained by a cutting down rather than a piling up of poetic diction; Stephens refuses to inflate an emotion or pad a self-sufficing line. It is his taste as well as his sensibility that saves his straightforward verse from being a collection of polysyllabic clichés. Beneath the curiously clipped rhymes there runs an original melodic stream, a fresh fluency which is not mere fluidity.

Technically, Stephens's later verse presents an interesting paradox: the lines are not only shorter, they are brusque and sometimes breathless; yet they convey a greater sense of amplitude than was ever sounded in his earlier and more popular verse. Such poems as "Shall He—Wilt Thou," "Envying Tobias," "To Lar, with a Biscuit," the memorable cycle "Kings and Tanists," and the peak of the volume, "Theme with Variations," disclose the ripeness of Stephens's wisdom; here vision is fused with clear perception and bitter humor. Half Gaelic, half Gothic, this is a poetry which is severe and strange, scornful and tender. It has that clarity which comes after a poet has reached his full maturity, when the personal element is inseparable from the universal.

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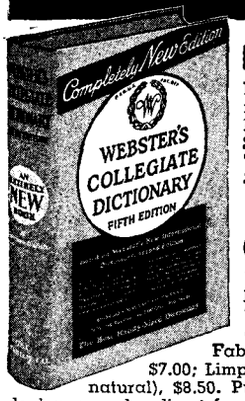

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The New Books

Belles Lettres

ILLUSION AND REALITY: A STUDY OF THE SOURCES OF POETRY. By Christopher Caudwell. Macmillan. 1938. $5.

The subtitle is misleading. "Illusion and Reality" is not a "study of the sources of poetry." Poetry is the nominal subject, to be sure, but it is forever getting bogged down in lengthy discussions of sociology and economics, of anthropology, of music, of psychoanalysis—matters which in the end become more or less violently related to the subject itself, but which manage in the process to obscure the issue rather than to clarify it. If the Blessed Isidore of Seville, that great Compiler, could have been inoculated with the germ of Marxism, he might have written this book. It is typical medievalism—medieval in its all-embracing scope, in its disordered jumble of authorities and citations, in its uncompromising attempt to manipulate all kinds of phenomena, however unpromising, in such a way as to force them to fit a preconceived *propositum*. That the *propositum* happens to be Marxian is irrelevant; it might just as well have been Yeatsian or Albigensian or Townsendite. What causes the book's formidable failure is not the author's thesis: it is his fanatic zeal for the thesis, coupled with an inability (for whatever reason) to arrange his material and to expound it proportionately. Universal knowledge cannot be crammed into three hundred pages, any more than Freud and Jung can be demolished in fifty. The range of the book is far too great, and it could easily have been limited.

The author is at his best when he is analyzing poets and schools of poetry, applying specific criticism to specific subjects. He traces the course of English poetry from, roughly, the schism of Henry VIII to the present, and he has many excellent things to say. Before anything else he is a partisan, hardboiled—he can smell a bourgeois farther off than Hitler can smell an oppressed minority—, but in this vein he is provocative and often convincing. His account of XIXth century poetry, for instance—the destructive individualism of the "Romantic," fatally pursuing his antisocial way into a private world to end finally in the anarchic *cul-de-sac* of Symbolism, Dada, *Surréalisme*—this account will not delight the faculty, except in so far as it condemns what the faculty calls "modernism," but it is basically sound.

D. F.

Fiction

HERE COMES A CANDLE. By Storm Jameson. Macmillan. 1939. $2.50.

At first glance, Storm Jameson's new novel looks pretty British. The jacket has a picture of an aristocratic old house called New Moon Yard, and the title is taken from an Old Rhyme ("Here comes a candle to light you to bed, Here comes a chopper to chop off your head"). But the old house turns out to be a rickety affair in the slums of London, occupied by the Screech Owl nightclub, a Café Bar, and a crowd of generally disreputable tenants; and as the entire action takes place on this set, the novel is in fact a kind of "Street Scene." If it is more Dickenesque, it is also both rowdier and bloodier than the American play. The cast includes some unsavory oldsters, a pair of crooks, a drunken doctor, an anarchist, and two prostitutes; the candle lights the nice young lovers to bed without benefit of sacrament; the chopper falls on four of the characters.

Just how serious Storm Jameson's intentions are in this novel we are not sure. It contains plenty of instances of frustration and sorrow, with restrained but somber footnotes about Life. It also contains references to a world of violence and suggestions of symbolism about an impotent England. But Miss Jameson plainly had a good time writing it—not merely because of the occasional mention of the unmentionable. She has reveled in her odd setting, her motley characters, and all the grotesque contrasts in her crazy-quilt pattern. And the reader can have a good time too.

At any rate, "Here Comes a Candle" made much the same impression on us as did Elmer Rice's play. It is vivid, lively, plausible; it is also more picturesque than profound. Like Mr. Rice, Miss Jameson makes life in a tenement seem more variegated and colorful than it actually is. Like him, she has recourse to melodrama to unify and dramatize her slice-of-life: the climax of the novel is a fire that destroys New Moon Yard and some of its tenants. It is an exciting climax, but it is patent artifice; despite the elaborate preparation from the outset, it seems neither logically nor artistically inevitable.

Our final comment, in other words, is the comment of one of the characters upon life: "In the short run" you "take it *and* leave it." This is a good novel for the short run, easy to take and easier to leave.

H. J. M.

GENERAL MANPOWER. By John S. Martin. Simon & Schuster. 1939. $2.50.

The intelligent amateur who spends part of his vacation writing a novel to the detriment of his golf occasionally rings the bell, but more often gives professionals the heartening reassurance that theirs is at least a semi-skilled trade. Mr. Martin, the national-affairs editor of *Time*, writes (not in the *Time* dialect, fortunately) a tale of the nineteen fifties, built around a protagonist who combines the varied excellences of Henry Ford, Charles Atlas, Henry Luce, Father Divine, and Buck Rogers. Having acquired an enormous clientele by his mail-order body-building course, he had the idea of hiring out these Samsons, whose physical strength has been fortified by a carefully built esprit de corps, for all sorts of civilian and eventually military work, to their own profit and that of the corporation; keeping them loyal by giving them security, unlimited opportunity for fornication, and a collegiate pride in the organization.

Here is the raw material for an amusing satire, and some of Mr. Martin's remarks in passing suggest that he could have written one if he had so chosen. But he seems to have a serious nature, and most of his book is given to the campaigns of the General Manpower army in Asia and California—a history which will excite only such readers as can get all steamed up over Edgar Rice Burroughs's warfare on Mars.

E. D.

THE STORY OF ROSABELLE SHAW. By D. E. Stevenson. Farrar & Rinehart. 1939. $2.

This latest book of Miss Stevenson's is "Pearl of Orr's Island" without the fire and conviction and emotional power which still give a certain life to the writings of Harriet Beecher Stowe. The story is much the same: what happens when you take into your quiet home a dark strange waif who has appeared in a storm; and though this time your beautiful blonde daughter does not marry the

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stranger, still his memory makes her more conventional husband seem a little tame, and disrupts your own relations with your wife.

It is true that the author of "Miss Buncle's Book," as its publishers say, saw with a "fresh modern eye"; but in "The Story of Rosabelle Shaw" Miss Stevenson is trailing off into an insipidity more than Victorian, a lack of realism uncommon even under the sixth George. The steady decline in her writing can be explained by the fact that this is her third novel to be published since last July; it is, however, hard to see why she should wish to write at such a rate, since her returns in both fame and fortune must have declined with equal steadiness since the days of the well-selling and spontaneous "Miss Buncle."

K. S.

History

FOUNDATIONS OF BRITISH FOREIGN POLICY. From Pitt (1792) to Salisbury (1902). Edited by Harold Temperley and Lillian M. Penson. Macmillan. 1938. $7.50.

This admirable collection of documents serves, among other purposes, to remind the short-memoried newspaper reader that the British Foreign Office on many previous occasions has been confronted, often simultaneously, with border disputes, minority problems, revolutions, imperial rivalries, and wars. The editors have assembled two hundred documents, including many private papers not previously published, to illustrate the policy of successive Foreign Secretaries during the nineteenth century. Excellent historical commentaries explain each item—memorandum, letter, diplomatic report, or parliamentary address—in the light of Britain's foreign and domestic affairs. Well organized and indexed, this volume should prove a useful but expensive acquisition for anyone interested in European diplomacy and for every college library. A similar collection for the 1900-1914 period, under consideration by the editors, would be welcomed by students of international affairs.

J. F. G.

THE HAWAIIAN KINGDOM. By Ralph S. Kuykendall. University of Hawaii. 1938. $5.

The Hawaiian archipelago, settled in prehistory by Polynesians, was "discovered" in 1778 by Captain James Cook of the British Navy, one of the world's notable explorers. In the next quarter century, the islands, ruled by local chieftains, were welded into one realm by Kamehameha, who established the Hawaiian Kingdom and founded his dynasty. When he died in 1819, sporadic contacts with Western civilization had begun through explorers, whalers, and traders. Within six months, Liholiho, his son and successor with the title of Kamehameha II, abolished the strict and barbaric *Kapu* or religious *tabus*, in effect shattering the native paganism, two weeks after the first ship bearing New England missionaries to the Sandwich Islands had sailed. The history of Hawaii is the impact and interaction of these diverse racial and cultural elements in an isolated, beautiful and fruitful microcosm. It is told from its inception, to 1854, the year of the death of Kamehameha III.

Hawaii is already rich in its literature—missionary memoirs, whalers' chronicles, and a latter-day series of excellent social and economic monographs issued under the University of Hawaii's auspices. But here we have the first half of what may be considered the first definitive history of this exotic meeting place of East and West, this unique melting pot of the mid-Pacific. It is a complete narration, yet unburdened with needless detail, workmanlike, scholarly, and above all, fascinatingly readable. It is a characteristically worthy cultural product of one of the most successful experiments in evolutionary self-government, and of communal responsibility perhaps unrivaled in the recent story of mankind.

E. G.

International

THE FAR EASTERN POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES. By A. Whitney Griswold. Harcourt, Brace. 1938. $3.75.

War in China has stimulated several recent attempts to describe and interpret the Far Eastern policy of the United States. In some cases these efforts have been downright journalistic and amateurish. The same cannot be said of this solid work by A. Whitney Griswold of Yale University. It is obviously the outcome of years of research. The author draws on hitherto unpublished sources. From the Spanish-American war to the current hostilities in China, every phase of American Far Eastern policy is meticulously described and voluminously documented. More than this, each successive period is given its full-rounded setting in world politics. The result approximates a reading course in the diplomatic cross currents of this century.

The scholarly qualities of Mr. Griswold's work are not permitted to develop into a pedantic objectivity. He has a definite point of view, and marshals an impressive array of evidence to support it. He believes that the United States should forswear all efforts to uphold the open door policy in China, as well as China's territorial integrity. His study thus becomes a strong buttress of the isolationist school of thought in the United States. Not all students of the Far East subscribe to this view, and we suspect that Mr. Griswold's volume will stir up a considerable degree of controversy.

T. A. B.

Miscellaneous

CONSULTATION ROOM. By Frederic Loomis, M.D. Knopf. 1939. $2.50.

Another doctor's autobiography, but one with a difference. For this is an autobiography in which our doctor is actually more interested in his cases and his science than in his own personality and in those experiences which made him what he is today. Each of the cases Dr. Loomis presents is from the history files he has been twenty years in collecting, and each has been chosen for its implications in a specific medical problem related to

(*Continued on next page*)

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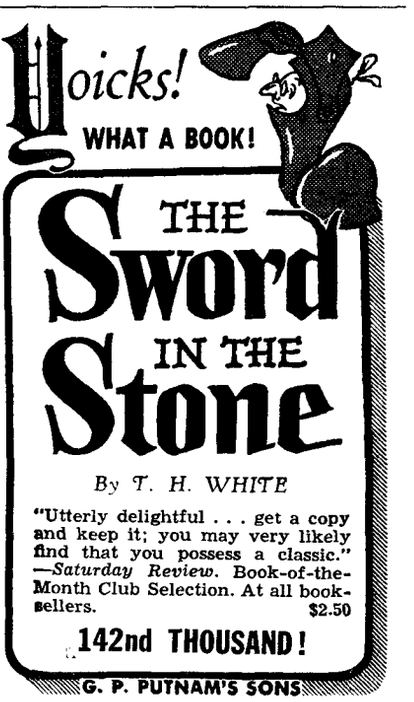
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The New Books

(Continued from preceding page)

women's physical and mental health. Each is crammed full of drama, for Dr. Loomis's specialty, that of obstetrics and gynecology, has brought him in constant contact with women at the most critical moments of their lives. The exciting stories cannot fail to capture the reader's attention, and he is then led painlessly into a lively exposition of scientific facts enlightened by much mellow wisdom. There is lots of humor in this book—some of the stories the Doctor tells on himself are inimitable—and the lusty acceptance of life's jokes and terrors alike, held the interest of this reviewer to the end, although we have become pretty well bored by medical excursions onto literary seas. Women will find "Consultation Room" full of things they should know about themselves, but almost any intelligent person will find enjoyment in its racy humor and genial understanding.

M. S. U., M.D.

EGYPTIAN ARCHITECTURE AS CULTURAL EXPRESSION. By E. Baldwin Smith. Appleton-Century Co. 1938. $6.

Mr. Baldwin opens his book with a succinct, lucid introduction on the Nile, which has always been the basis of all life in Egypt, and on the climate of the Nile Valley, the available structural materials, and the social conditions, which in combination influence to a large extent, although they do not wholly predetermine, the functions and forms of Egyptian buildings. He follows it with a convenient table based on Meyer's conservative conclusions for dating the successive periods of Egyptian history through its long course of more than five millennia, and then traces the development of Egyptian architecture from the primitive hutch of mud-daubed wattle and thatch in the Predynastic era to the supreme technical achievements of massive pyramids and temples and of innumerable tombs which still remain, even in ruin, impressive wonders of the world.

His approach as an architect interested professionally in all aspects of architecture, but attracted especially to this particular expression of it, challenges and, by virtue of excellent presentation, holds attention. It is by no means a handicap that the author is not "a trained Egyptologist." On the contrary, although his scholarship is indubitably sound, as his acquaintance with the actual remains and with most of the authoritative literature indicates, his unprejudiced, unhampered interest in the subject has permitted him to present it from a new, almost philosophical point of view and in an exceptionally attractive form unencumbered by too obtrusive archeology.

The author's drawings, rendered in architectural draughtsmanship and uniformly placed on left-hand pages for convenient reference, adequately illustrate the text. In the bibliography it is surprising to find no mention of George A. Reisner's important work on "The Development of the Egyptian Tomb," published in 1936. A. S.

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Science

ANIMALS WITHOUT BACKBONES. By Ralph Buchsbaum. University of Chicago Press. 1938. $5.

This volume is not a popularization of science but a textbook of science; yet because of its simplicity, its beautiful modern design, and its interesting presentation, it is entirely suitable for and will appeal to non-scientific readers. The illustrations consist of hundreds of superb photographs, line drawings, and diagrams such as cannot be found in any other published work. The text is brief, but adequately instructive and will be followed with interest by any reader.

It may be remarked that 95 per cent of all living creatures are "animals without backbones" (invertebrates), this bigger half of the animal kingdom including such familiar forms as the amœbas, sponges, corals, jelly fishes, worms, starfishes, and insects. This is an excellent volume for youngsters, or for anyone who wants to know, "what is it?" H. W. S.

PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, traveling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature, expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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GENERAL

AUTODIDACTA RUSTICANA: "Rambles on Philosopher's Heights" — Autographic Handprinting, $1.00. A Kubisch, New Berlin, N. Y.

Double-Crostics: No. 253

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	1-F	2-L	3-U	4-K	5-A	6-O	7-C	■	8-J	9-H	10-V	11-N	12-P	■	13-T	14-G
15-E	■	16-M	17-S	18-O	19-A	■	20-E	21-B	22-T	■	23-F	24-M	25-V	26-J	27-O	28-K
29-S	30-N	31-P	32-Y	33-T	34-U	■	35-V	36-U	37-Q	38-I	39-G	■	40-A	41-F	42-X	■
43-E	44-G	■	45-N	46-V	47-O	48-R	49-S	■	50-C	51-I	52-E	■	53-U	54-Q	55-R	■
56-J	57-R	58-E	■	59-C	60-V	61-G	■	62-E	63-C	■	64-F	65-S	66-P	67-C	68-R	■
69-I	70-R	71-E	■	72-I	73-W	74-U	75-O	76-X	77-F	78-T	79-C	■	80-D	81-G	82-A	■
83-J	84-A	85-T	■	86-B	87-Q	88-L	89-V	90-J	91-H	92-X	93-I	94-W	■	95-T	96-M	■
97-M	98-Y	99-G	100-S	■	101-Y	102-B	103-S	■	104-Y	105-U	106-J	107-E	■	108-W	109-C	110-Q
■	111-I	112-U	113-A	114-L	■	115-Y	116-R	117-B	118-W	119-A	■	120-R	121-S	122-C	■	123-E
124-Q	125-U	126-B	■	127-K	128-P	129-G	130-R	■	131-D	132-T	■	133-D	134-N	135-Q	■	136-T
137-R	■	138-M	139-X	140-U	141-W	142-N	143-O	144-S	145-L	■	146-K	147-U	148-F	149-B	■	150-Y
151-U	152-D	153-I	154-N	155-C	■	156-R	157-E	158-D	■	159-V	160-B	161-H	162-J	163-F	164-D	■
165-K	166-J	167-H	168-E	169-D	170-C	171-N	■	172-Y	173-D	174-A	175-Q	■	176-L	177-J	178-Y	179-V
180-H	181-U	182-F	183-Q	184-O	185-N	186-K	187-X	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 16 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Greek mythologist.

B. Sustenance.

C. Boisterous behavior (slang).

D. By-products of wool sorting.

E. Birthplace of Sir Edward Elgar.

F. Doomed to misfortune (comp.).

G. Character in "The Ambassadors."

H. Initial impulse or movement.

I. Away, in position or direction.

J. Strong and good, as of ale.

K. Rumpus (slang-comp.).

L. Pertaining to a rounded elevation.

M. Choice part.

N. Birthplace of King Arthur.

O. Chaffers (verb).

P. Danish-American journalist (1849-1914).

Q. Bosom friend of Nisus (Homeric).

R. Second wife of Edgar (944-975).

S. Aggregate.

T. Incapacity for happiness.

U. Russian painter (1842-1904).

V. Things that have reality.

W. American poet (1853-1916).

X. Unbalanced (slang).

Y. Something packed in ship's hold.

WORDS

58 5 84 119 40 113 82 174 19

102 149 117 86 126 21 160

155 109 170 79 7 67 63 122 50 59

173 164 80 133 169 158 131 152

43 52 157 20 15 123 71 62 107 168

77 148 163 64 41 1 182 23

14 39 61 99 81 129 44

161 167 9 180 91

51 111 72 153 69 38 93

177 90 8 26 166 56 106 83 162

127 4 165 28 186 146

2 176 88 114 145

24 97 16 96 138

171 185 142 30 134 11 154 45

75 143 47 6 18 27 184

66 128 31 12

37 87 175 135 124 54 110 183

130 55 156 137 116 70 120 68 48

100 121 144 29 17 65 49 103

13 78 57 85 22 132 33 136 95

125 140 3 112 34 36 181 105 53 74 147 151

179 10 35 159 89 46 60 25

141 73 118 94 108

187 92 139 76 42

101 178 32 104 150 115 98 172

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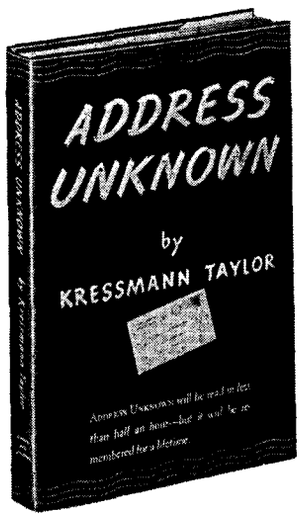

. . . read it in twenty minutes, remember it for the rest of your life . . .

Last week *Address Unknown*, by KRESSMANN TAYLOR, was published complete in book form by *The Inner Sanctum*.

This story ran in the September-October issue of *Story Magazine*. There it was called "a story in letter form that ranks with De Maupassant." At the time, WALTER WINCHELL said "*Address Unknown* is the best piece of the month, something you shouldn't miss." And within ten days the entire issue of *Story* was sold out.

This month, *Reader's Digest* selected this unforgettable story for condensation. The enormous amount of enthusiasm it has aroused made it obvious that *Address Unknown* should be put into a good substantial binding and have its own independent and perhaps permanent place on the country's bookshelf.

Address Unknown is only 64 pages long. It contains just three characters, two of them speaking in an exchange of letters, the third being the chief subject of the correspondence.

With an opening which might be called almost gentle, *Address Unknown* quickly builds up to a climax and an ending worthy of DE MAUPASSANT. It is far more than a beautifully and powerfully written story—its author shows on every page a deep and tragic realization of all that Hitlerism means in terms of human beings.

"I think 'Address Unknown' belongs among the classics, with Poe and De Maupassant."—ROBERT NATHAN, *author of "Journey of Tapiola." "An unforgettable piece of work."*—REV. JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

—ESSANDESS

Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE Post Office Dept. rules that the new cheap rate for mailing books (1½c. per lb.) does not apply to "pamphlets of less than 24 pp." This is a dangerous encouragement to the verbosity of pamphleteers. ☞A point on which conscientious Old Q. would like advice is: does making notes or memoranda in a book necessarily shift it to 1st-class mailing? ☞Old Q. was raised on the antique principle, *Lectio sine stilo somnium* ("Reading without a pencil is no better than sleep"). Consequently most of his books carry in the margins his memoranda of approval, speculation, or dissent. ☞But when he wishes to lend one of his books, by mail, he finds that a volume which would otherwise travel for 1½c. costs him 36c. postage. ☞So he must either give up annotating his books or give up lending them to distant friends. This would be a hardship either way. We wish Mr. Roy North, one of the assistant Postmasters General (whose very sympathetic and sensible ruling was reprinted in the *Publisher's Weekly* of Jan. 14) would give judgment in this matter. ☞Speaking of privileges of the mail, the *S.R.L.* was startled to receive, on the official stationery of the Senate Chamber of the State of Colorado, a long bulletin from State Senator George A. Glenn, M.D., on the subject of Rejuvenating Love Potions. "Undoubtedly you will prefer to have this rewritten by one of your staff writers," said the Senatorial medico, "but acknowledge it as my discovery." ☞To senescent Quercus, the staff writer most obviously in need of it, this essay on S. A. was handed. ☞It appears that Dr. Glenn, in his studies of history, found that Cleopatra, Casanova, Richelieu, Rasputin, Du Barry, Catherine of Russia, Ninon, Lola Montez, etc., made use of love potions. The Dr. decided that something should be done about this, and (presumably while the Colorado Senate was off duty) he visited the dense jungles of S. A. (South America) "with extensive laboratory equipment." Here he discovered natives who make use of vegetable hormones that are a "potent rejuvenant." ☞"These intriguing herbs," according to the Dr., will keep us young and "afford the ability to love with a passion of a bottomless abyss." ☞The most passionate bottomless abyss in this office is the waste-basket. ☞Columbia University Press says "With all this excitement over books about doctors, one could do much worse than read Trollope's *Doctor Thorne*" (published in the World's Classics series of the Oxford Press). ☞Our cousin Harry Quercus in Chicago was the first to tell us about the "Limited Edition" of Hurricane Chairs offered by Nichols & Stone Co., of Gardner, Mass. These are chairs made of New England pine felled in the great storm of last September, each one branded as such.

☞A subscriber in Nebraska writes "H. says she cherishes her *S.R.L.'s* which I send her, and would like to keep them for reference, but her janitress (who was with the Irish Players) pleads for them —and sends them to a son in China." ☞Delighted to see a new edition of that fine book *The Art Spirit* by Robert Henri, now in its 9th printing; known mostly to students of painting, it is fresh with meaning for every kind of imagination. But they shouldn't spell Twachtman "Twatchman." ☞The Wine and Food Society of London tantalize us by sending bulletins of their prowess. Sir Gurney Benham, F.S.A., says that at their recent Oyster Feast 232 guests consumed 9000 oysters, an average of more than 3 dozen per guest. ☞Seven kinds of oysters were served, from Long Island, Portugal, 2 from France, Holland, and 2 from England. ☞Old Q. remarks only that if they didn't have some from the Chesapeake we "deeply sympathize." ☞The Newberry Library, Chicago, is showing until March 31 an exhibition of books and prints representing American Humor. These are from the private collection of Franklin J. Meine, now a research fellow at Northwestern University. The items range from *Yankee Doodle* to Ring Lardner. ☞In his catalogue introduction Mr. Meine remarks that Bill Nye and Gelett Burgess introduced elements of "genteel idiocy" which are much in the mood of today. ☞The Dial Press, 432 Fourth Ave., N. Y. C., offers a prize of $1,000 for an original novel about schoolteachers; only teachers in the public schools are eligible to compete. ☞Whittlesey House, in its new trade bulletin, lays justifiable stress on *American Saga* by Marjorie Barstow Greenbie. This is a rich collection of American history and folk lore; we saw it in advance form months ago and have been hankering for the complete book ever since. To be published in February. ☞The illustrated catalogue of Jo Davidson's *Spanish Portraits* (busts of the leaders in Loyalist Spain) is on sale for the benefit of the Spanish children, sponsored by a committee headed by Dorothy Parker. The catalogue, at $1, is an attractive item for collectors, it contains biographical sketches of the sitters, by Ernest Hemingway, Vincent Sheean, E. A. Mowrer, John Gunther, Elliot Paul and others. It is hoped that the book trade will help the distribution, or the catalogue may be had direct from Jacques Davidson, 8206 34th Avenue, Jackson Heights, N. Y. City.

☞The Academy of American Poets offers a first prize of $1,000, and five additional awards of $100 each, for the best poems on "The World of Tomorrow"; the winning poem will be publicized by the New York World's Fair 1939 as its formal embrace by the Muse. The judges are William Rose Benét, Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Louis Untermeyer. ☞Official entry blanks can be had from the A. A. P., 435 East 52 Street, N. Y. C. ☞The new editor of the *American Mercury* will be Eugene Lyons, well known newspaper correspondent and author. The April issue will be the first under Mr. Lyons's regime. Mr. L. E. Spivak, the new owner, says the magazine will continue to help the sane American from being "terrorized with bugaboos."

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